The New
SUGARCRAFT
COURSE

CHRIS JEFFCOATE & JACKIE KUFLIK

MEREHURST

Dedication

Chris and Jackie would like to thank Doris and Gladys, without whom this book would not have been written. This book is dedicated to our children, with our love.

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CONTENTS

Introduction
6

Baking
7

Sugarpaste
19

Royal Icing
49

Sugar Flowers
83

Gâteaux
113

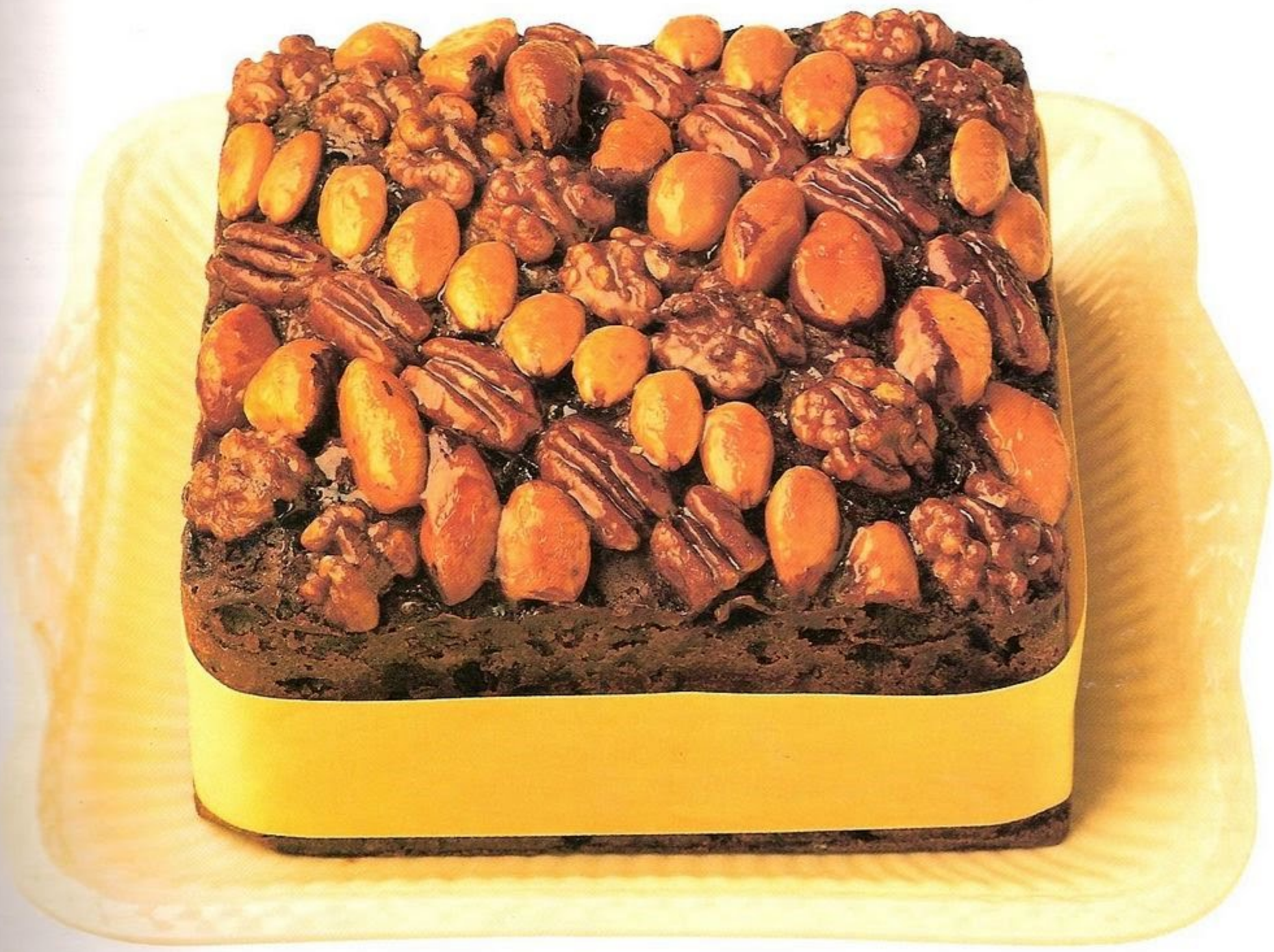
Templates
131

Index
143

Acknowledgements
144

BAKING

When making a cake on which you will spend a great deal of time decorating the outside, it is important to remember that the inside should be good as well. Although the first impression of any celebration cake is a visual one, the lasting impression is of its flavour, texture and eating quality. Your attention to these details will ensure that your cake is remembered as much for the pleasure of eating it as for its spectacular appearance.



CAKE TINS

A wide variety of tins is now available for cake baking. Tins are not only designed to be a particular shape and size; consideration is also given to ease of use and how the baked cake will be removed from the tin. Nevertheless, you should ensure that tins are well prepared.

VICTORIA SANDWICH (SHALLOW) TINS These are usually used in pairs. Place one tin on a double sheet of greaseproof paper, draw round the base with a pencil, and then cut out the discs of paper just inside the pencil line (to allow for the thickness of the tins). Grease the tins with vegetable fat (shortening), and fit one of the discs of paper into the bottom of each of the tins, then grease the paper to aid easy release of the sponge cakes. Use this method for Swiss roll tins as well (page 10).

DEEP CAKE TINS Measure the circumference of the cake tin first, using string or a tape measure. Cut a greaseproof paper strip, 5cm (2 inches) deeper than the tin and 5cm (2 inches) longer than the measured circumference. Fold up 2.5cm (1 inch) of the paper along one long edge, press to make a crease in the paper, then unfold. Grease the tin with vegetable fat (shortening). If

you are lining a tin with curved sides, snip with scissors along the folded edge up to the crease. This will help you fit the paper neatly around the edge of the tin. For straight-sided tins, you need only snip the folded area when fitting around corners. Fit the strip into position around the inside of the tin. Place the tin on a piece of greaseproof paper, draw around the base with a pencil, and cut out the shape just inside the pencil line. Fit the shape in the bottom of the tin so that it covers the snipped edges of the side lining paper.

Cakes that take a relatively long time to bake, especially rich fruit cakes, need some protection to ensure even baking. To achieve this, wrap a few layers of brown paper around the outside of the tin and fix into position with string.

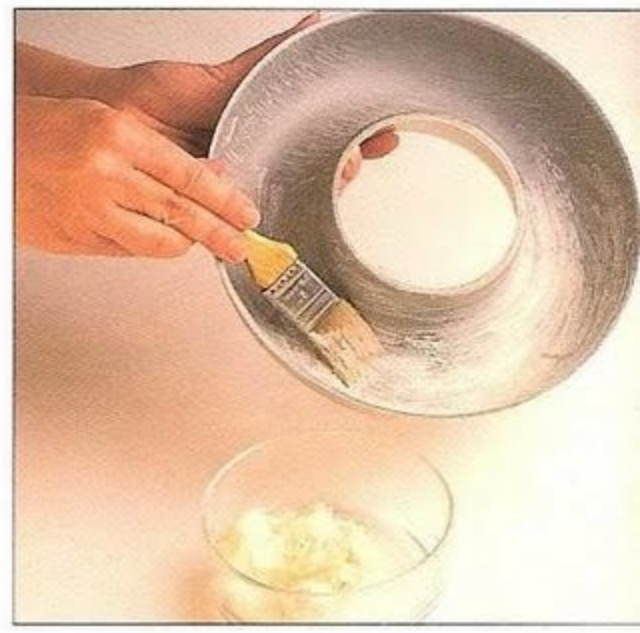
MOULDED NOVELTY TINS These cannot be lined with paper so to

EXPERT ADVICE

Shiny new tins can reflect the heat, producing an uneven bake, so although you should wash tins after use, there is no need to remove the heat and baking marks.

ensure that your cake will not sti
first grease well with vegetable
(shortening), and then dust lib
ally with plain flour. Knock out a
excess flour before filling the
with mixture.

If you are baking a large quant
of shaped cakes, or bake nove
cakes regularly, then a convenie
method is to mix together eq
amounts of vegetable fat and flo
and to brush this inside the ti
This mixture can be kept in t
refrigerator in a sealed contain
but bring it back to room tempe
ture before using again.



BASIC CAKE RECIPES

Victoria Sandwich

MAKES ONE 18CM (7 INCH) SANDWICH CAKE

175g (6oz/¾ cup) butter, softened
175g (6oz/¾ cup) caster sugar
3 eggs (at room temperature), beaten
175g (6oz/1½ cups) self-raising flour

TO FINISH

Jam
Icing (confectioners') sugar

1 Grease and line the bases of two 18cm (7 inch) sandwich tins (page 8). Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/Gas 4).

2 Cream together the butter and sugar until it is light and fluffy. Add the beaten egg in three stages, beating well after each addition. If the mixture starts to curdle, add a spoonful of flour with each addition of egg.

3 Sift the flour on to the mixture, and fold in gently with a large metal spoon or your hand.

4 Divide the mixture between the prepared tins, and bake in the oven for approximately 20 minutes or until the tops of the cakes are firm when pressed with your fingertips. The cake should spring back to shape and the fingermarks disappear.

5 Turn the cakes out of the tins on to a wire rack. Peel off the lining paper, and leave the cakes to cool.

6 When the cakes are cool, sandwich them together with jam. Place a paper doily on top, dust with icing sugar, then carefully remove the doily, for a simple but effective decoration.

VARIATIONS

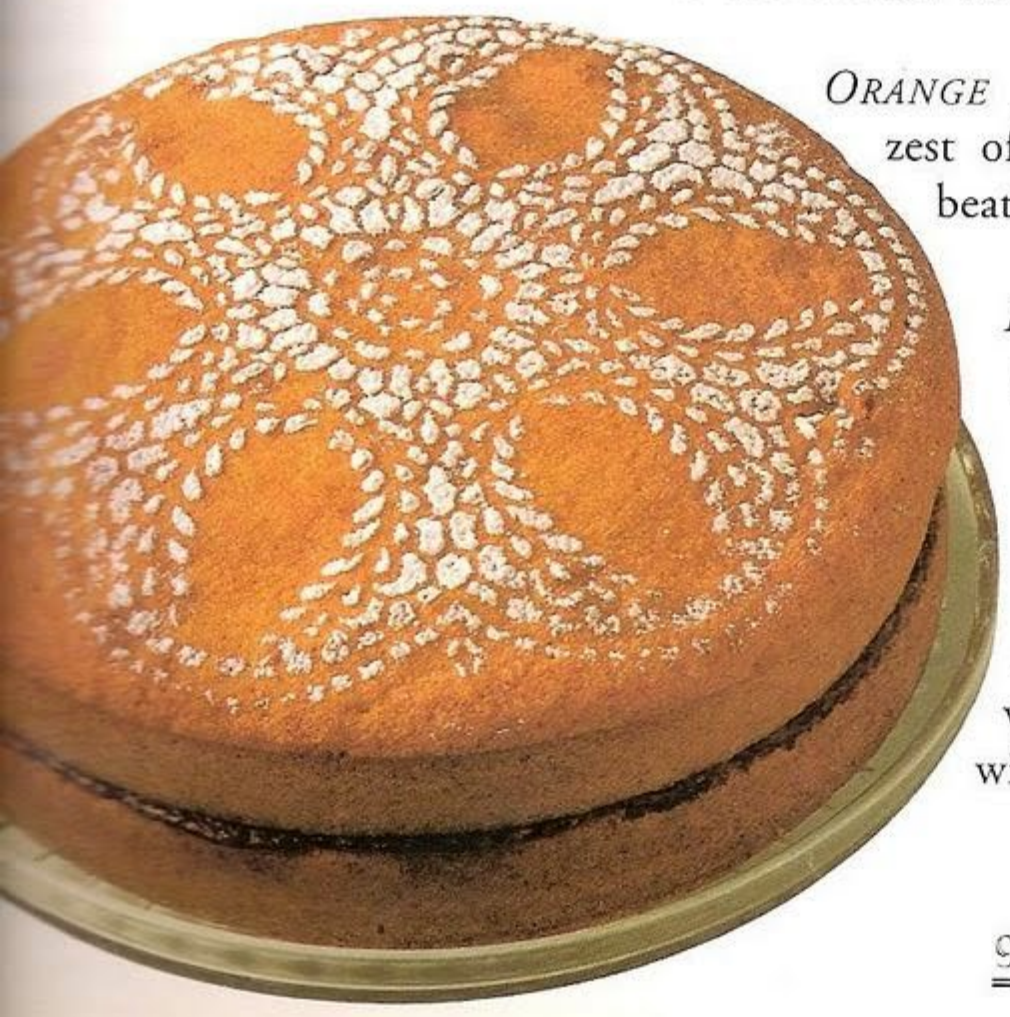
CHOCOLATE Replace 1 tablespoon flour with 1 tablespoon cocoa powder, and add 1 tablespoon milk.

COFFEE Dissolve instant coffee granules in a little boiling water to make a strong solution. The amount you use depends on taste, but 1 teaspoon granules mixed with 2 teaspoons water is a good guide. Add to the mixture after adding the egg.

ORANGE Add the grated zest of 1 orange when beating in the eggs.

LEMON Add the grated zest of 1 lemon when beating in the eggs.

VANILLA Beat in 2 teaspoons vanilla essence with the eggs.



EXPERT ADVICE

When mixing a cake, curdling usually occurs because the ingredients are too cold. Make sure you start with everything at room temperature.

Boiled Chocolate Cake

MAKES ONE 18CM (7 INCH) ROUND CAKE

100g (4oz/½ cup) margarine
100g (4oz/⅓ cup) black treacle
100g (4oz/⅓ cup) golden syrup
50g (2oz/⅓ cup) brown sugar
150ml (¼ pint/⅔ cup) milk
2 eggs
200g (7oz/1¾ cups) plain flour
25g (1oz/¼ cup) cocoa powder
1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda

1 Grease and line an 18cm (7 inch) deep, round cake tin (page 8). Preheat the oven to 160°C (325°F/Gas 3).

2 In a large saucepan, warm together the margarine, treacle, syrup and sugar. Add the milk and allow to cool.

3 Beat the eggs, and blend with the cooled mixture. Sift the dry ingredients together into a bowl, add the cooled mixture, and fold in gently with a spatula or tablespoon.

4 Turn the mixture into the prepared tin, and bake in the oven for 1¼–1¾ hours or until the cake is risen and springy to the touch.

Swiss Roll

MAKES ONE 20CM (8 INCH) SWISS (JELLY) ROLL

3 eggs
75g (3oz/⅓ cup) caster sugar
75g (3oz/⅔ cup) plain flour

TO FINISH

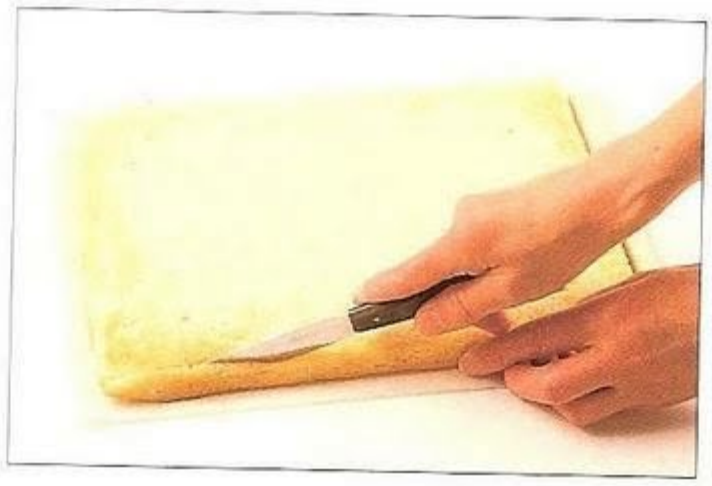
Caster sugar
Warmed raspberry jam

1 Grease and line the base of a 30x20cm (12x8 inch) Swiss roll tin (page 8). Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F/Gas 6).

2 Beat the eggs and caster sugar together in the bowl of an electric mixer, and warm over a pan of hot water. When the mixture is warm, transfer the bowl to the mixer, and whisk at top speed until the mixture has doubled in volume, is light and holds its shape.

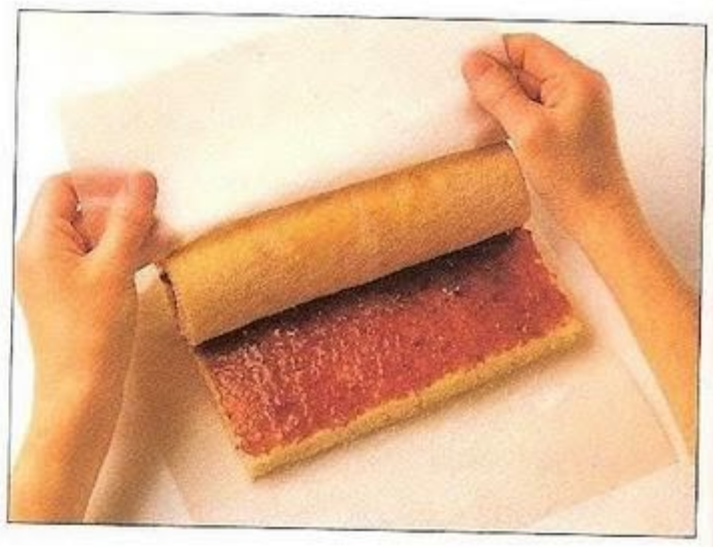
3 Sift the flour twice, once on to a sheet of greaseproof paper, and the second time over the mixture. Gently fold in by hand, using open fingertips. Do not overmix.

4 Turn the mixture into the prepared Swiss roll tin, and spread with a palette knife or spatula to achieve a flat surface. Bake immediately in the oven for approximately 5 minutes only or until the surface of the cake is golden and firm when pressed with fingertips.



5 Immediately turn the Swiss roll over on to a clean tea-towel or sheet of absorbent paper that has been lightly dusted with caster sugar. Remove the lining paper and trim the edges of the cake. Spread warmed raspberry jam over the Swiss roll while it is still hot.

6 Score across the width of the roll approximately 1cm (½ inch) in from a short edge. Roll from the scored edge, using the cloth or paper as a lever, pulling in a downwards direction to create a tight roll. Leave to cool, then sprinkle with caster sugar.



Genoese Sponge

'Genoese' is a term used to describe a sponge cake with moist eating properties, a firm texture and an even crumb structure. It bakes with a flat top and rises evenly.

MAKES ONE 25X18CM (10X7 INCH) CAKE

100g (4oz/½ cup) margarine
160g (5½oz/1¼ cups) self-raising sponge flour
185g (6½oz/¾ cup) caster sugar
Pinch of salt
2 eggs, beaten
100ml (4fl oz/½ cup) milk
1 tablespoon glycerine
A few drops of vanilla essence

1 Grease and line a 25x18cm (10x7 inch) deep cake tin (page 8). Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/Gas 4).

2 Put the margarine in the bowl of an electric mixer with the flour, caster sugar and salt, and crumble together with your fingertips.

3 In a separate bowl, mix the eggs, milk, glycerine and vanilla essence together. Switch the electric mixer on at slow speed, and gradually add

the liquid to the crumbly mixture over 1 minute. Add food colouring if using. Scrape down the mixture before beating for 1 minute on medium speed.

4 Transfer the mixture to the prepared tin and smooth flat with a palette knife. Bake in the oven for approximately 20 minutes or until golden and firm when lightly pressed with your fingertips. The cake should spring back and the fingermarks disappear.

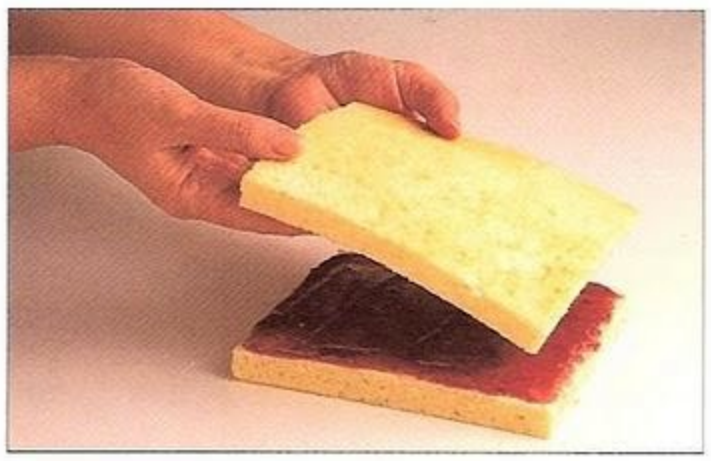
5 Turn the cake out on to a wire rack, peel off the lining paper, and leave to cool.

CUTTING AND PREPARING GENOESE

1 Remove the surface skin of the Genoese with a long, sharp knife. The skin should lift easily away from the body of the cake but be careful not to cut too much cake away. Keeping the knife as flat as possible will help with this. Trim the edges of the cake to remove any crusty or misshapen pieces.

2 Slice horizontally through the cake, using the long, sharp knife and holding it as flat as possible. To keep the cut even, slice through from one side until the knife disappears, turn the cake and repeat with the next side, then turn again and

repeat until all four sides are cut. Continue cutting towards the middle of the cake, turning continuously.



3 Separate the two cut halves of the cake by sliding the top half off. Spread one half with jam or cream and then carefully lift the top half back on, using the flat of your hand to support the cake.

Rich Fruit Cake

The ingredients for this recipe include nougat paste, a smooth paste made commercially from hazelnuts, chocolate and sugar. It is available from cake decorating and sugarcraft shops. Chocolate hazelnut spread can be used as a substitute. For alternative sizes of this cake, see chart on page 138. Cakes made by metric measures will be slightly shallower than those made with imperial measures.

MAKES ONE 20CM (8 INCH) SQUARE CAKE

275g (10oz/ 1¼ cups) butter
275g (10oz/ 1¾ cups) dark soft brown sugar
3 teaspoons glycerine

EXPERT ADVICE

If you are using Genoese cake for building unusual shapes, we don't recommend filling the layers with both jam and cream as the layers will slide apart too easily.

5 teaspoons black treacle
3 teaspoons nougat paste, optional
5 eggs, beaten
275g (10oz/ 2½ cups) plain flour
3 teaspoons ground mixed spice
40g (1½oz/ ½ cup) ground almonds
250g (9oz/ 1½ cups) raisins
250g (9oz/ 1½ cups) currants
500g (1lb 4oz/ 3 cups) sultanas
225g (8oz/ 1⅛ cups) glacé cherries, halved
Grated zest and juice of 1 orange and 1 lemon
4 tablespoons rum or brandy, for maturing

1 Grease and line a 20cm (8 inch) square cake tin (page 8). Preheat the oven to 160°C (325°F/Gas 3), placing a small tin of water on the floor of the oven to create humidity.

2 Put the butter, sugar, glycerine, treacle and nougat paste, if using, in a bowl and cream together until light and fluffy. Add the eggs in four stages, mixing well after each addition. Add the flour, spice and ground almonds, and half mix into the mixture. Add all the fruit, zest and juice of the orange and lemon, and mix well.

3 Turn the mixture into the prepared tin, and bake in the oven for about 3½ hours. Test the cake by inserting a fine skewer into the middle; when removed, the skewer should be clean, with no uncooked mixture attached to it.

ruit cake
rns
ne

4 Remove the cake from the oven and, while still hot, pour over the rum or brandy, assisting its absorption by pricking the surface of the cake with the skewer. Leave the cake to cool.

5 When cold, remove the cake from the tin and peel off the lining paper. Wrap the cake in waxed paper, then foil, and leave to mature, preferably for one month.

Light Fruit Cake

This lighter fruit cake does not need to be left to mature.

MAKES ONE 20CM (8 INCH) SQUARE CAKE

185g (6½ oz/¾ cup) butter, softened
175g (6oz/¾ cup) light golden sugar
4 eggs, beaten
250g (9oz/2¼ cups) plain flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
Pinch of salt
100g (4oz/ 1 cup) ground almonds
450g (1lb/ 3 cups) mixed fruit, including glacé cherries, glacé pineapple, sultanas, stem ginger and rum-soaked dried apricots, all chopped to the size of the sultanas
Grated zest and juice of 1 orange
A few drops of vanilla essence
2 teaspoons glycerine

1 Grease and line a 20cm (8 inch) square cake tin (page 8). Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/Gas 4).

2 Cream the butter and sugar together in a bowl until light and fluffy. Add the eggs in four stages, beating well after each addition. Add the flour, baking powder, salt and ground almonds, and half mix. Add the cleaned fruit, flavourings and glycerine, and mix well.

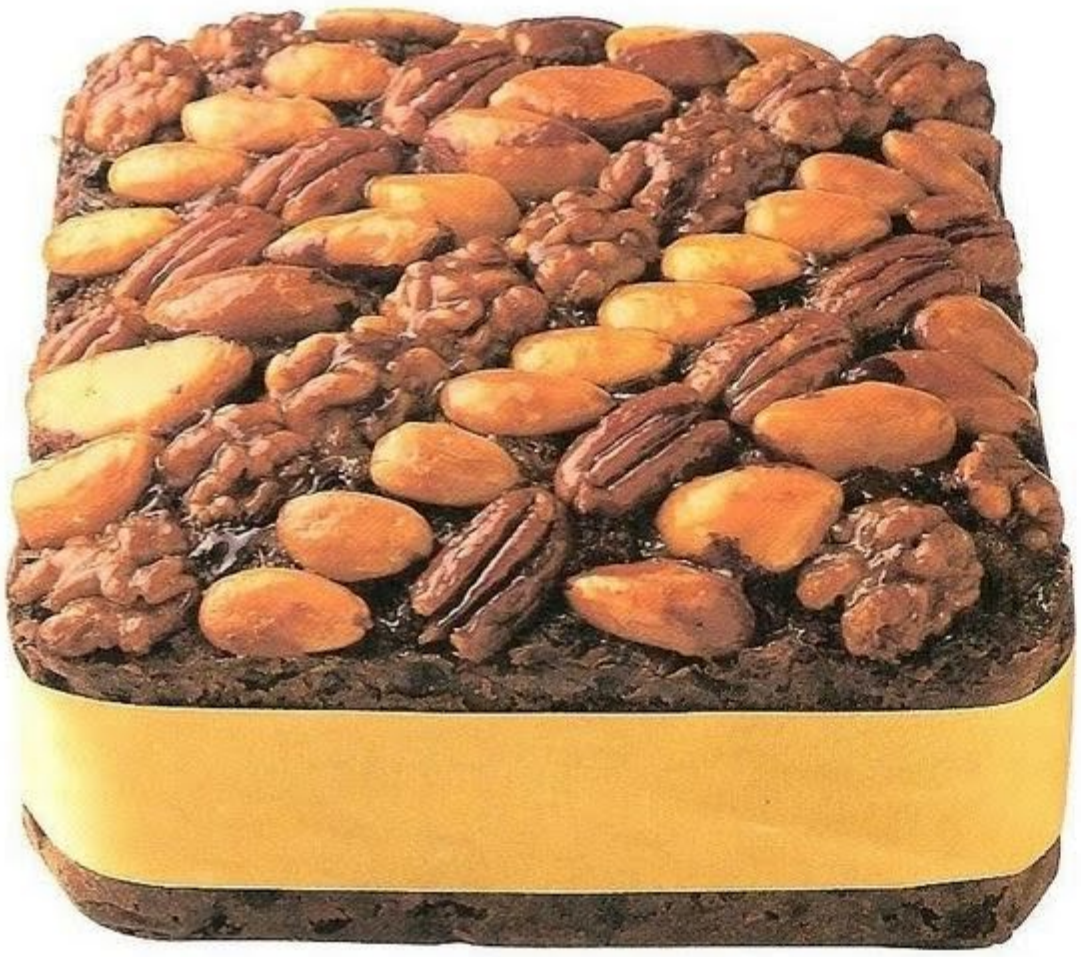
3 Turn the mixture into the prepared tin, and bake in the oven for 1–1½ hours. Test the cake by inserting a skewer in the middle; when the cake is cooked, the skewer should come out clean, with no uncooked mixture attached to it.

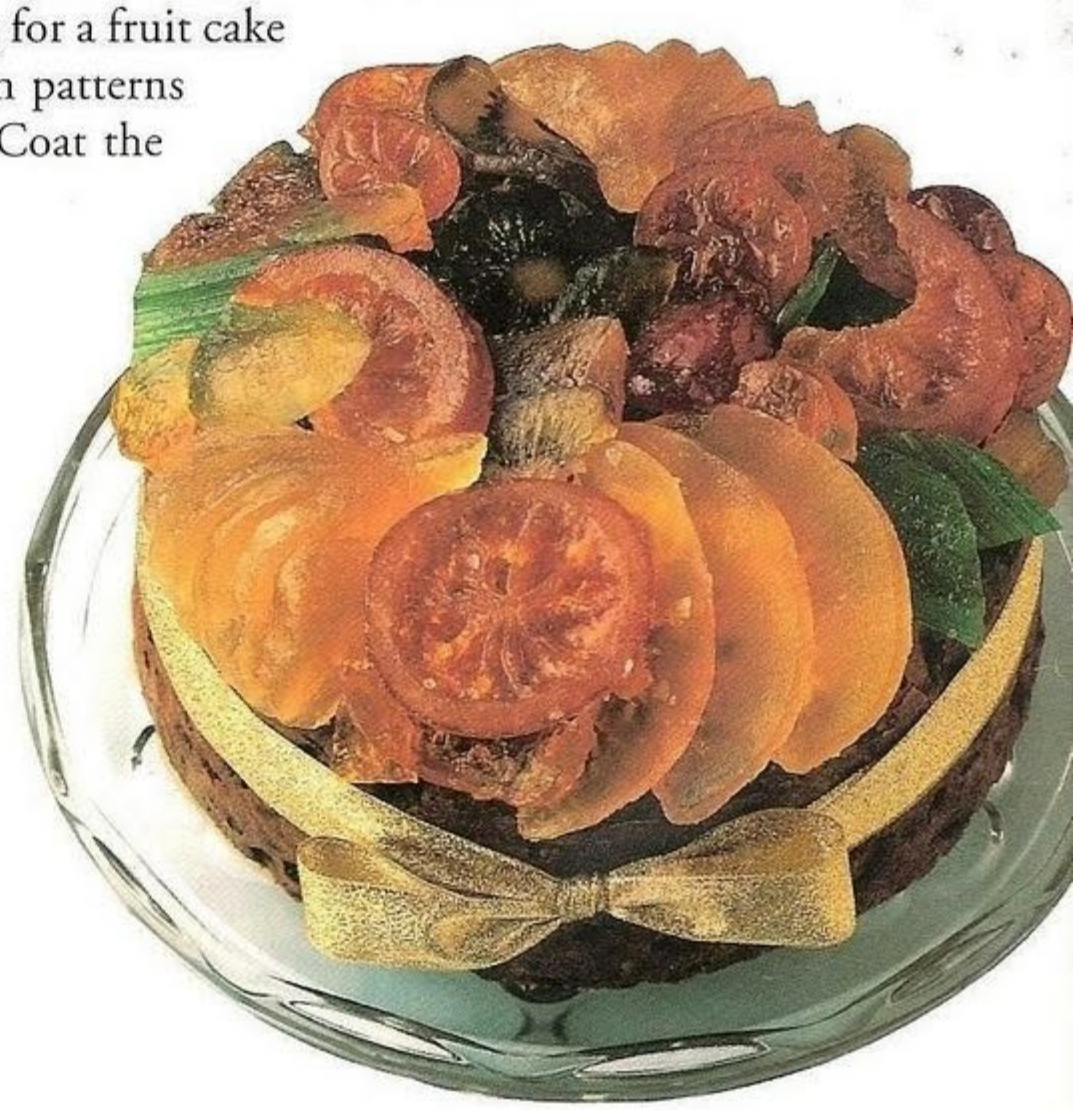
4 Leave the cake to cool in the tin, then turn out and peel off the lining paper.

VARIATIONS

NUT TOPPING With such a variety of whole shelled nuts (brazils, walnuts, hazelnuts, pecans, almonds) available in the shops, you can make an attractive topping for a fruit cake by arranging them in patterns on top of the cake. Coat the top of the cake with warm apricot glaze (page 13), arrange the nuts as required, and leave to set. When set, brush the top of the nuts with warm apricot glaze and leave to set again. Finish by securing a broad, attractive ribbon around the cake.

CRYSTALLIZED FRUIT TOPPING A more colourful (but more expensive) alternative to nuts is to make patterns with crystallized fruit. (The fruit is available in large supermarkets and healthfood shops, but the best selection, used on the cake illustrated, is from Harrods.) Make sure you use crystallized, not dried, fruit: cherries (green, yellow and red), pears, pineapples, oranges, mandarins, kumquats, kiwis, figs, strawberries and angelica are just a few of the fruits available. Some fruit can be purchased whole and, if large, may need to be sliced before use, keeping the smaller fruit whole to create an attractive arrangement. Spread a layer of warm apricot glaze on the cake, then arrange the fruit on top. If desired, glaze the top of the fruit.





MARZIPAN

Marzipan (almond paste) is used for both coating and decorative purposes. It forms a smooth and flawless coating on a cake – the perfect base for royal icing or sugarpaste (rolled fondant), and forms a barrier to prevent moisture from the cake seeping into the sugar coating. As a modelling medium, marzipan is easy to handle and pliable, and can be coloured by kneading in food colouring. The illustration above shows a round of homemade marzipan, which is easy to make if you prefer not to use commercial brands.

Homemade Marzipan

Homemade marzipan has a grainier texture than commercially made marzipan, which is passed through heavy rollers to create the totally smooth texture with which we are familiar. The flavour of homemade marzipan can be adjusted to taste by adding more or less almond essence, and the colour of the almonds can be maintained by mixing in a glass or glazed bowl (a metal bowl can give the marzipan a greyish tinge). When using raw egg, there is always a risk of salmonella, so use homemade marzipan quickly, and ensure that you wash your hands well between separating the egg and mixing the marzipan.

225g (8oz/1½ cups) icing (confectioners') sugar
225g (8oz/2 cups) ground almonds
1 large egg white
1 teaspoon lemon juice
A few drops of almond essence

1 Place the icing sugar and ground almonds in a bowl, add the liquid ingredients and stir together. Knead the mixture until smooth.

2 Store in a polythene bag until ready to use. Use within a week of making.

APRICOT GLAZE

This can be made in any quantity and is brushed on a cake before coating with marzipan. Sieve some apricot jam into a saucepan and bring to the boil. Add water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until the glaze will coat the back of a metal spoon in a thin layer. Bring to the boil again, and use as required. Apricot glaze can be stored in the refrigerator in a clean jar with a tightly fitting lid. After storing, bring to the boil again, and use while hot.

COATING WITH MARZIPAN

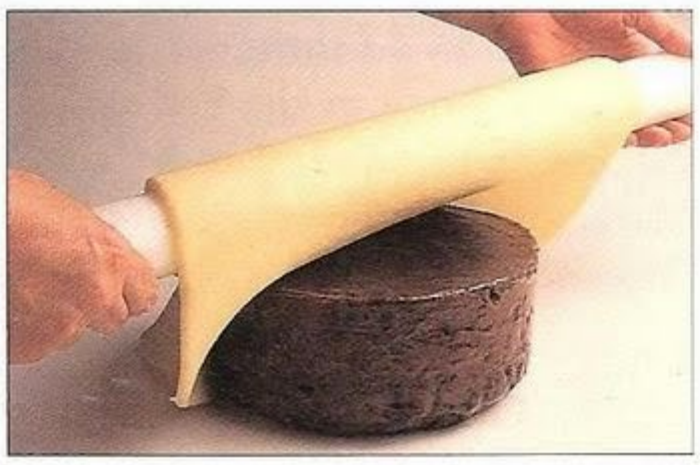
To obtain a flat surface to your cake, turn the cake upside-down. If the cake has peaked during baking or has an uneven surface, trim it level before turning the cake over. To avoid wasting too much cake, you might be able to turn the cake upside-down without too much trimming, if any; gaps at the bottom edge can be packed with small pieces of marzipan before the whole surface is coated.

ALL-IN-ONE METHOD

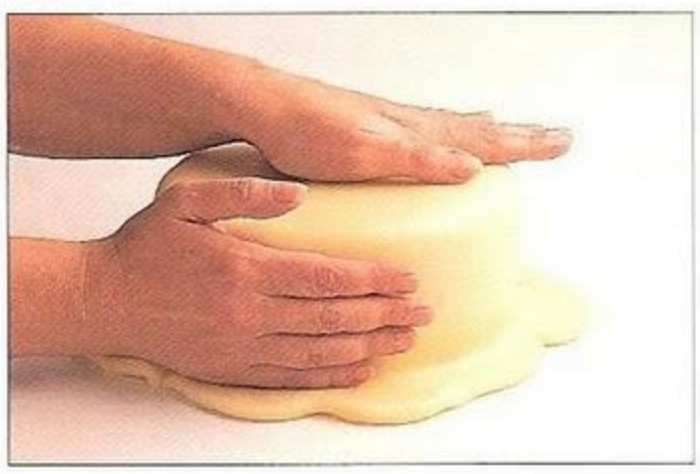
This method of coating a cake with marzipan creates a good base for sugarpaste, and is suitable for all shapes of cake.

1 Turn the cake upside-down. Measure the cake across the top and down two opposite sides. Add

2.5cm (1 inch) to this measurement. Brush the top and sides of the cake with boiled apricot glaze.



2 Knead the marzipan into a smooth ball and roll it out on a work surface or non-stick board dusted with icing (confectioners') sugar, turning the marzipan occasionally to prevent sticking and to keep it circular, until the required diameter is reached. The thickness of the marzipan can vary depending upon personal choice. Lift the marzipan away from the work surface, using the rolling pin as a support, and lower it over the surface of the cake, placing the marzipan against the side of the cake first.



3 Smooth the marzipan down with your hands, firstly across the top of the cake with the flat of your hand, then over the edges with your hands slightly cupped. Smooth the sides of the cake, again with the flat of your hand, and with a slight upwards movement.

EXPERT ADVICE

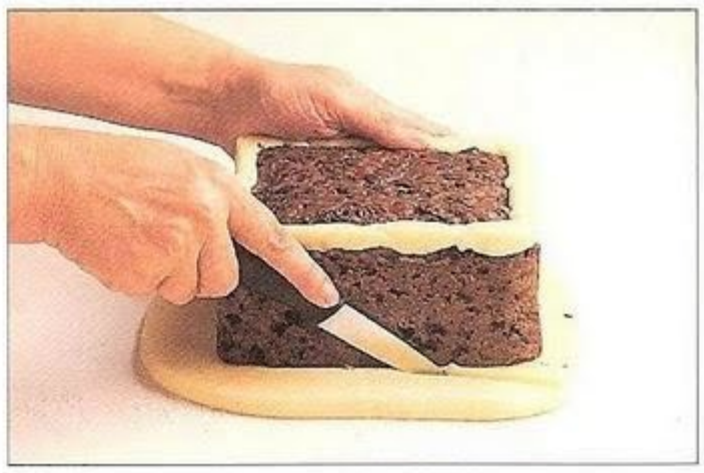
If a fold appears in the marzipan, lift the marzipan outwards, and then gently ease it in again, smoothing gradually downwards. Do not attempt to press the fold in as this will result in an uneven surface.

4 Smooth the marzipan down to the bottom of the cake, and trim off any excess with a sharp knife. Give the cake a final polish with the flat of your hands and leave to dry or crust for a few hours.

TOP AND SIDES METHOD

For this method of coating a cake with marzipan, the top and sides are coated separately, creating strong (90°) edges suitable for coating with royal icing.

1 Turn the cake upside-down and pack the bottom edges with marzipan to obtain a smooth finish, if necessary. Brush the top surface with boiled apricot glaze. Roll out the marzipan on a work surface or non-stick board dusted with icing

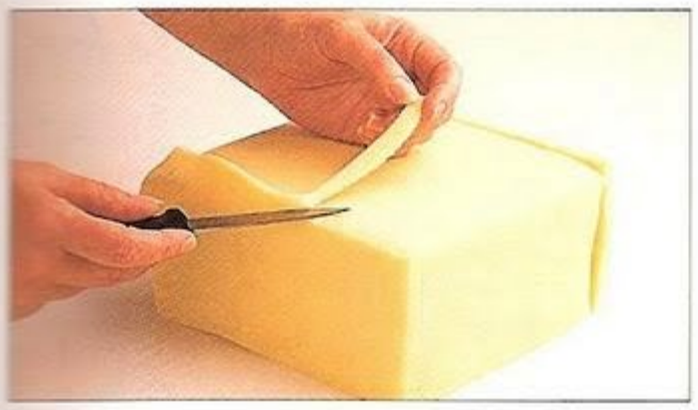


(confectioners') sugar until the marzipan is slightly larger than the cake top and the thickness required. Lower the jammed surface of the cake on to the marzipan and trim with a sharp knife. Turn the cake back over.

2 For a round cake, brush the sides with apricot glaze. Roll out the marzipan into a long strip and trim to the length of the circumference of the cake. Trim to the depth of the cake plus 1cm (½ inch), dust with a little icing sugar to stop the marzipan sticking, and roll it up. Unroll the marzipan around the side of the cake, trim to fit, and trim the top edge with a sharp knife.

3 For a cake with corners, brush alternate sides with apricot glaze. Roll out the marzipan into a rectangle slightly wider than the length of one side of the cake, and long enough to coat all the sides (i.e. four times the depth of one side for a square cake, and six times for a

hexagon, and so on). Cut out the required number of side pieces, making each one slightly taller than the cake and slightly wider than the width of the cake.



4 Position the first side of marzipan and smooth into place. Trim the top, cutting inwards towards the centre of the cake. This makes a good seal. Trim the marzipan to fit at the corners. Turn the cake and repeat, brushing with glaze when necessary.

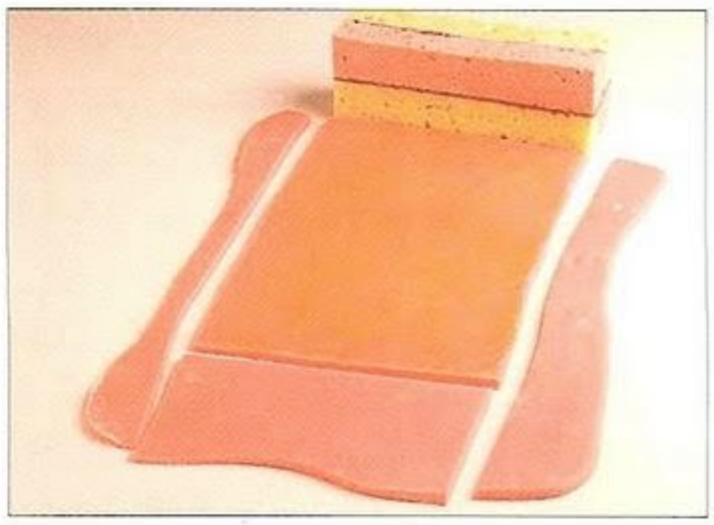
Battenburg Cake

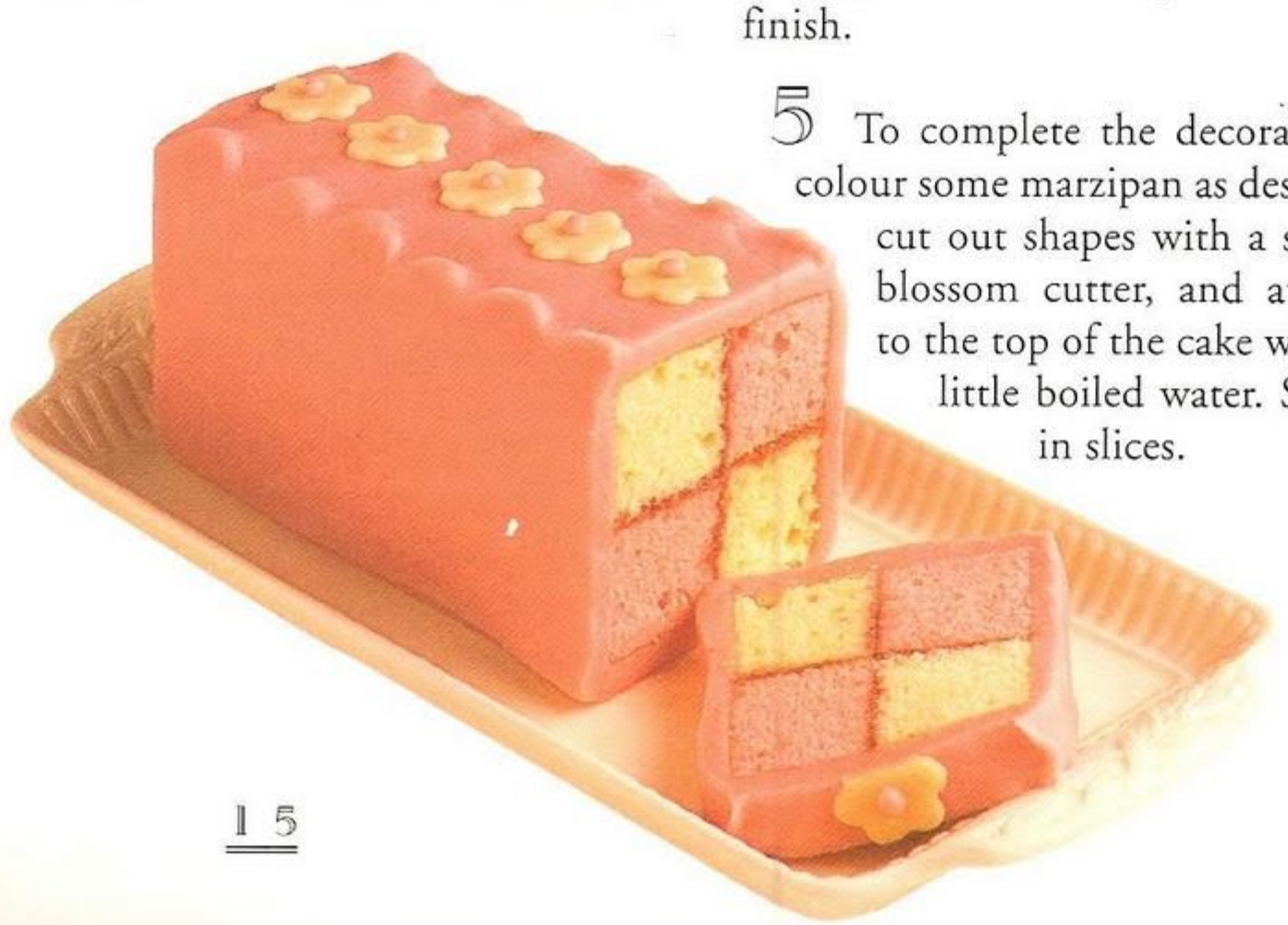
This traditional cake is usually made from pieces of pink and white Genoese sponge, glued together with jam. The whole is then coated in a thin layer of marzipan.

Pink Genoese sponge (page 10)
Plain Genoese sponge
2 tablespoons raspberry or strawberry jam
225g (8oz) pink marzipan (almond paste)
Icing (confectioners') sugar
Apricot glaze (page 13)

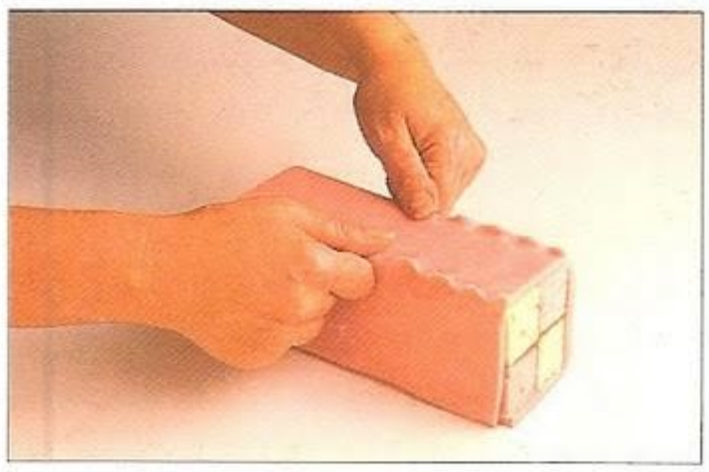
1 Trim the two pieces of Genoese to the same size – about 20cm (8 inches) long, 5cm (2 inches) wide and 2.5cm (1 inch) deep. Spread the top of one piece with raspberry or strawberry jam, and place the other piece on top.

2 Cut through the two layers lengthwise to produce two long strips, each with a square of pink and a square of white when viewed from the end. (Use a cutting guide if you have one.) Turn both pieces of cake on to their sides and spread one with jam. Lift the other piece on to the jam to produce a checker-board effect at the end.





3 Roll out the marzipan on a work surface dusted with icing sugar, into a rectangle of the required thickness, and trim to the size of the cake. The marzipan rectangle should be as wide as the length of the cake, and long enough to cover all four sides of the Battenburg. Spread a thin layer of boiled apricot glaze over the surface of the marzipan. Lift the cake on to the marzipan, aligning the edge of the cake with the edge of the marzipan. Roll the cake along the marzipan until the four sides are coated, with the join underneath. Trim away any surplus marzipan.



4 While the marzipan is still soft, crimp the top edges of the cake. Hand crimping is a traditional finish for a Battenburg; pinch the marzipan edge between your thumb and forefinger (or your thumb and the knuckle of your forefinger). Finally, trim the two edges for a neat finish.

5 To complete the decoration, colour some marzipan as desired, cut out shapes with a small blossom cutter, and attach to the top of the cake with a little boiled water. Serve in slices.

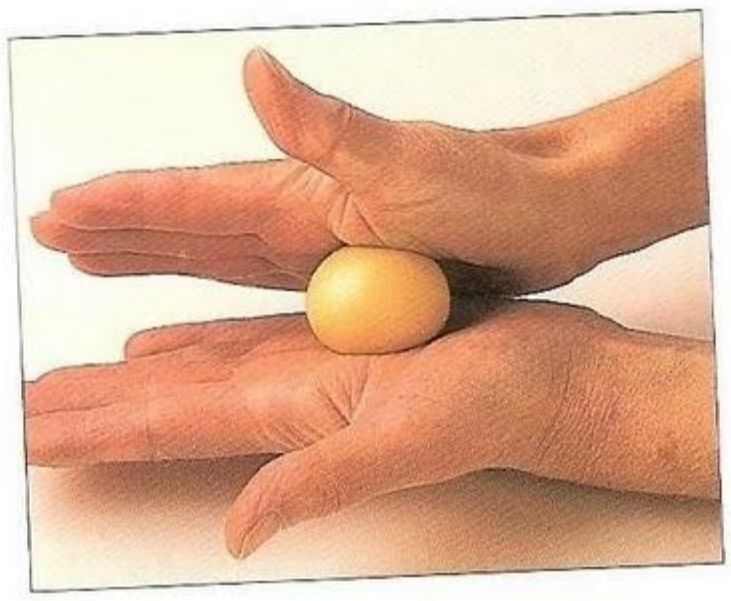
Marzipan Modelling

Marzipan (almond paste) is a good modelling medium as it remains soft and pliable for some time, and can be coloured easily. Although you can make a special paste for modelling with 'raw' marzipan (a commercially made paste which has a high almond content), the readily available bought marzipans can all be used.

Keep the marzipan in polythene bags when you are not using it. Try not to overknead the paste as it can become oily as the almond oil is worked out. If this happens, mix in a few drops of orange flower or rose water, leave to rest in a polythene bag and wash your hands in cool water. If the marzipan is sticky, wipe your fingers with a damp cloth. It is a good idea to keep a damp cloth beside you at all times when modelling with marzipan. Generally, freshly modelled pieces will stick to themselves, but if they have dried, glue them together with a little melted white chocolate. Don't use royal icing as this will crack away from the marzipan as it dries.

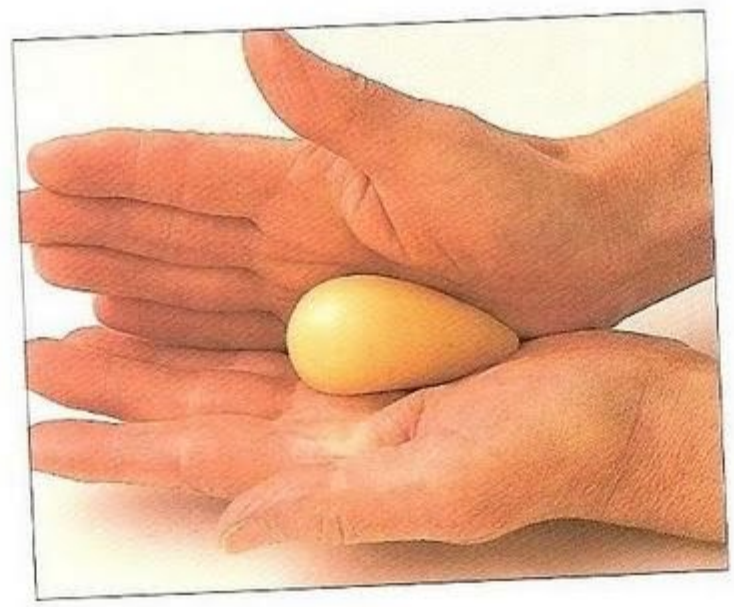
Basic Shapes

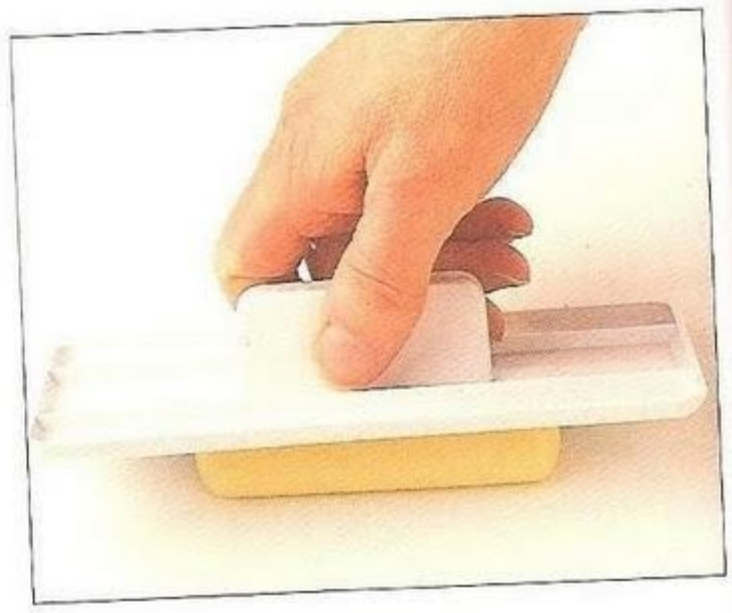
All modelling starts with a ball. As well as being a shape in itself, the process of rolling a ball will ensure a perfectly smooth surface from which to model everything else.



1 To make a ball, knead the paste lightly, place it in the palms of your hands and rotate. Keep your fingers well stretched out to polish the marzipan smooth as it rolls around.

2 For a pear shape, roll a ball, then open the palms of your hands and rock them backwards and forwards. Pressure from the sides of your hands will thin one side, while the thicker side protrudes between your thumbs.

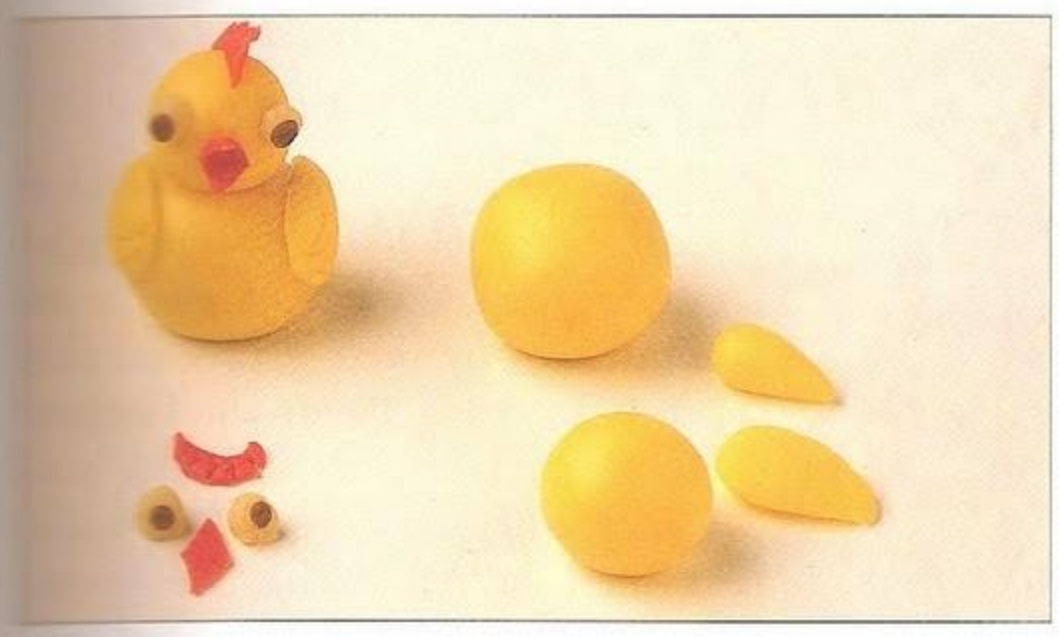


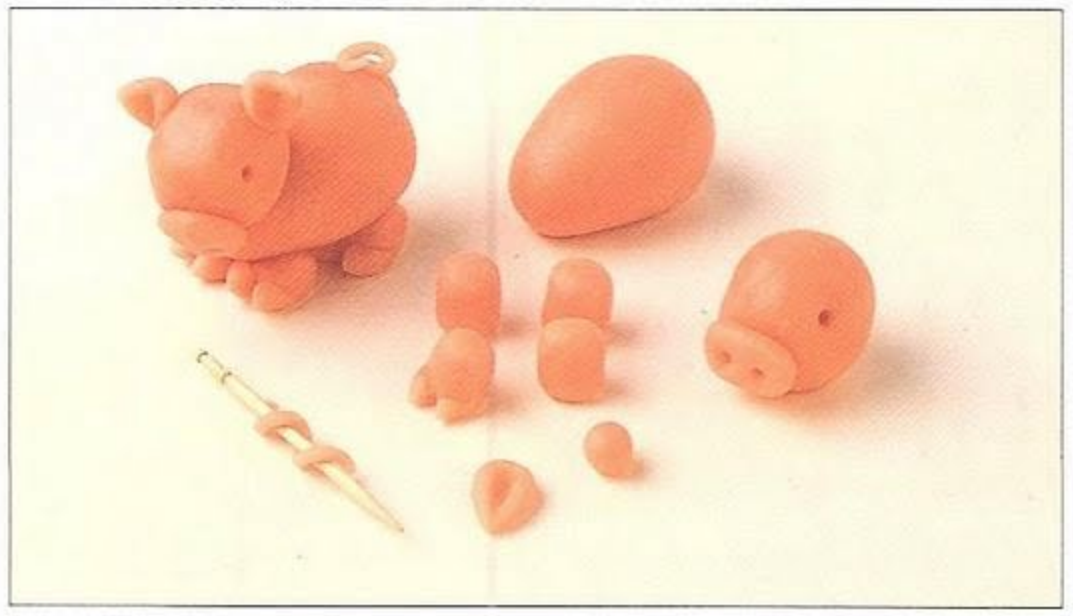


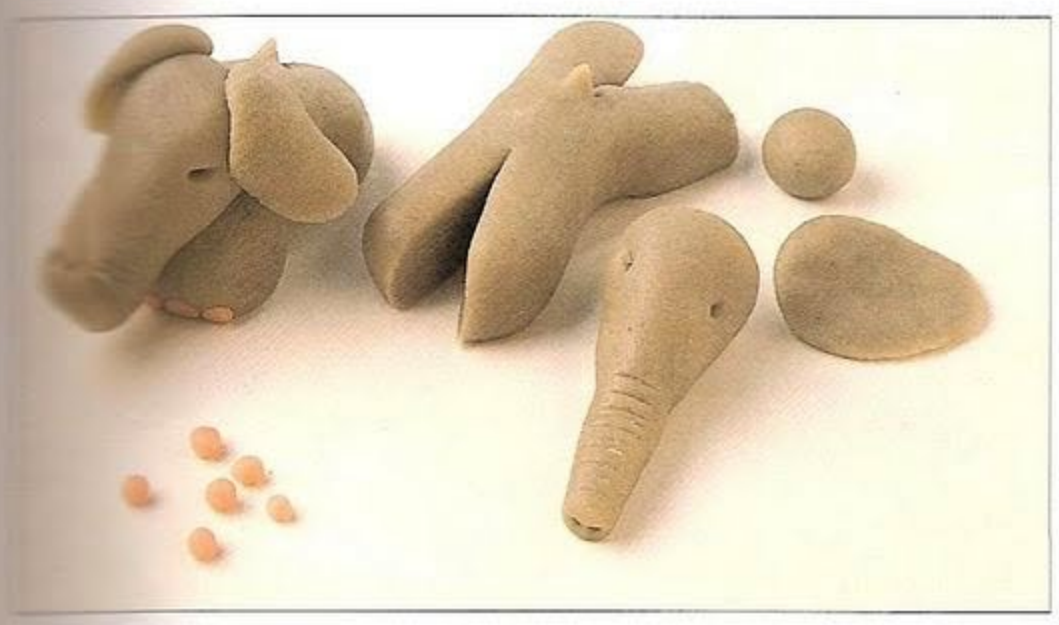
3 For a sausage shape, again start by rolling a ball. Although a sausage can be modelled in your hands, for a bump-free, perfectly smooth finish, use an icing polisher and roll the paste backwards and forwards on a hard surface or non-stick board.

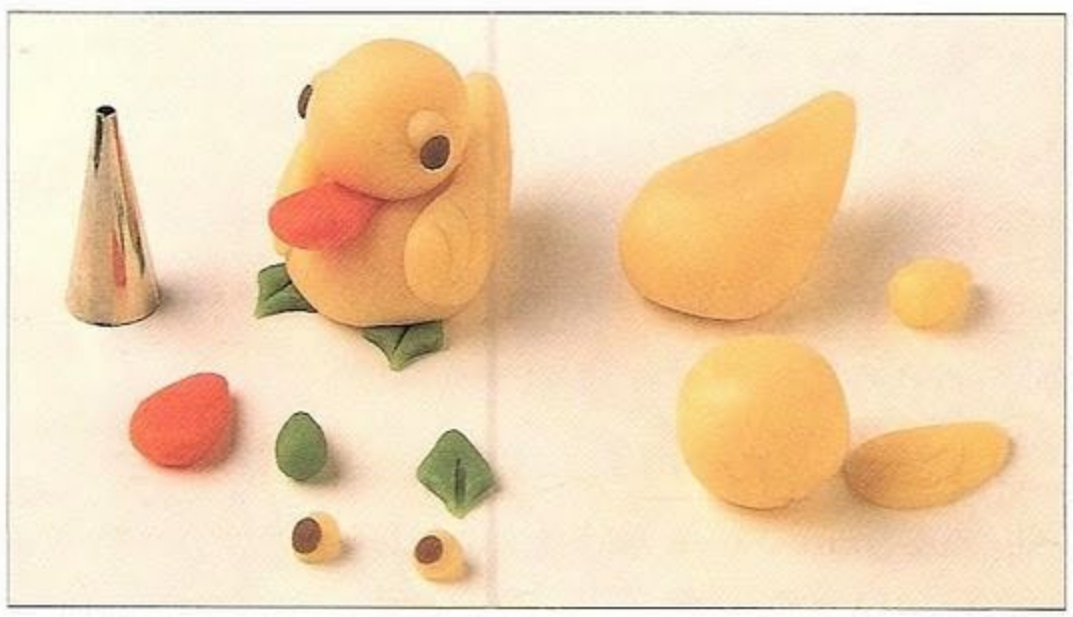
Marzipan Animals

Basic marzipan animals are usually modelled to the same general size, whether making a chick or an elephant, although we can appreciate that in real life, a chick and an elephant are at the opposite ends of the scale! 'Cute' features are common on marzipan animals – big eyes and cheeky expressions.









Chick

Colour approximately 25g (1oz) marzipan as required, and separate off about one third to make two wings from flattened pear shapes. Roll the remaining piece into two balls, one larger than the other, and use the larger ball for the chick's body and the smaller ball for its head. Shape a beak and comb, and mark the wings with a knife. Add eyes made from tiny flattened balls of paste.

Pig

Colour approximately 25g (1oz) marzipan as required, and separate off about one third. Roll the larger piece into a shape for the body, and use the remainder to shape the head and feet. Twist a fine sausage of paste around a cocktail stick (toothpick) to shape a tail. Add ears, a snout and trotters, and mark eyes and nostrils with a cocktail stick.

Duck

Colour approximately 25g (1oz) marzipan as required, and separate off about one third. Roll the larger piece into a pear shape for the body, lifting the pointed end slightly to form the duck's tail. Roll the remaining marzipan into a ball for the head, and shape wings and a beak. Use a piping tube (tip) to mark the wings.

Elephant

Colour approximately 40g (1 ½ oz) marzipan as required, and shape two thirds into a sausage for the body. Cut and open each end of the sausage to make legs, and cut a tail in the paste with scissors. Shape the head from the remaining one third, firstly by making a pear shape, then by rolling the trunk from the thinner end of the pear. Add ears, eyes, and trunk markings, as shown.

The little leprechaun is an example of the next step in marzipan modelling, from modelled coloured shapes to assembling more detailed pieces and mixing colours.

Marzipan Tea Fancies

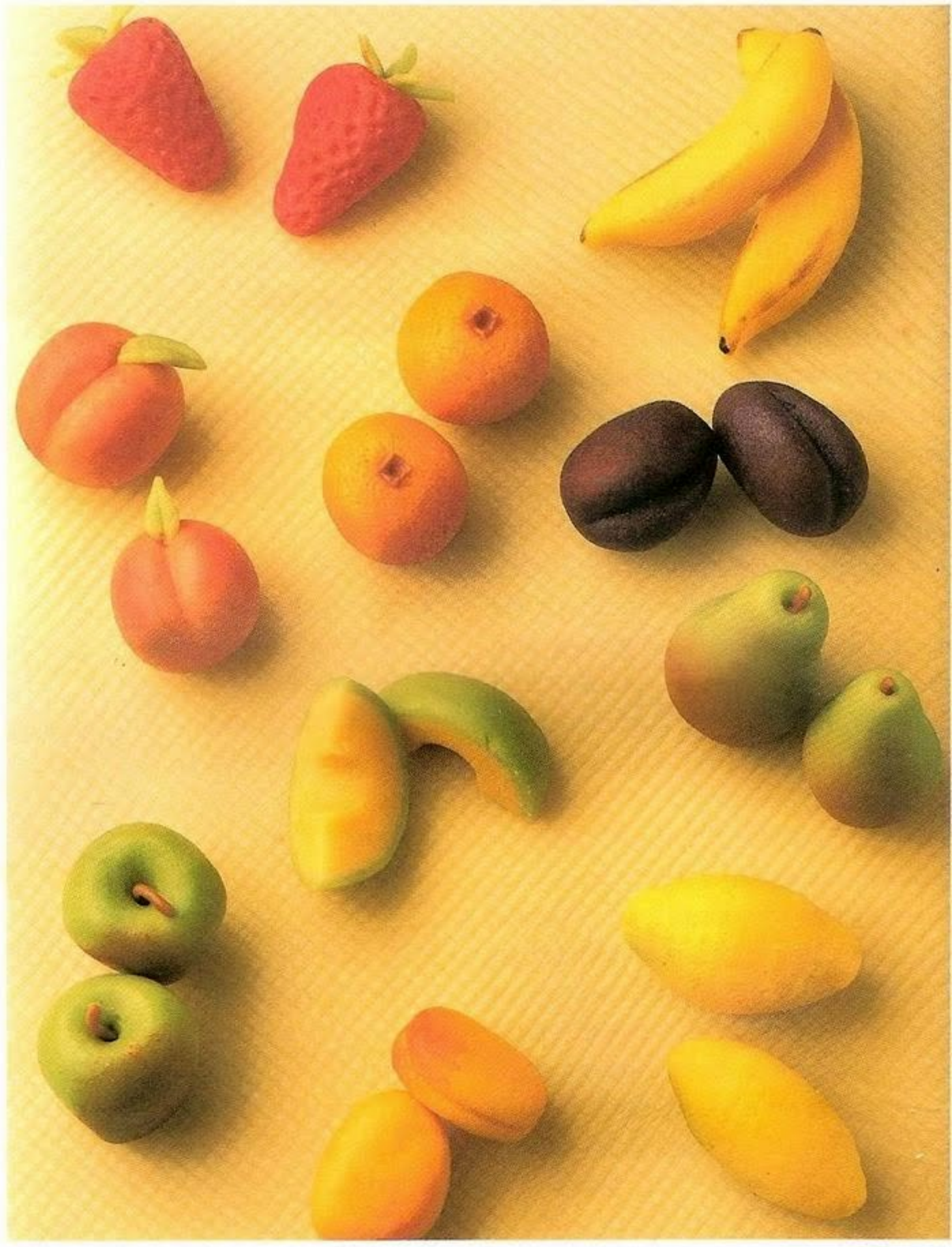
Marzipan is a wonderful medium for texturing and colouring, producing many different effects, as illustrated by these dainty tea fancies. To make them, cut Genoese sponge into a variety of shapes, generally no larger than 3.5cm (1½ inches) overall. Brush the shapes with boiled apricot glaze, then coat with a *thin* layer of marzipan textured to the finish required. Decorate with shaped pieces or cutouts.

Marzipan Fruits

All the fruits illustrated are modelled from the basic ball, pear and sausage shapes described on page 16. Colour the marzipan as required and add texture to appropriate fruits by indenting all over with the end of a paintbrush (strawberry), or rolling on a nutmeg grater (orange and lemon). Add stalks, calyxes and leaves as required: for the strawberry, the calyx is cut from thinly rolled green marzipan using a small calyx cutter; the orange stalk and the base of the apple are cloves with their seed pods removed; the apple and pear stalks are very thinly rolled sausages of brown marzipan.

Add extra colour to the fruits by dusting with petal dusts (blossom tints) in appropriate colours, using a soft brush. Alternatively, use a fine paintbrush or a sponge and liquid colours.

Small marzipan fruits make delicious petits fours. Life–sized versions can be arranged attractively in a bowl and used as a table decoration or centrepiece.



SUGARPASTE

Sometimes called rolled fondant or ready-to-roll icing, sugarpaste has now become very popular amongst both professional and amateur cake-decorators. It can be used to coat any type of cake and is easy to apply, providing a smooth, clean finish that is firm when set, yet soft to cut and eat. It can also be used in a number of decorative ways: when freshly applied and still soft, it is the ideal medium for texturing techniques such as crimping and embossing, and many of the cake-decorating skills adapted from needlework and other crafts, such as quilting and stencilling, can be worked in sugarpaste to great effect; once firm, sugarpaste provides a good base for piping and other finishing touches. Strengthened with gum tragacanth, the paste can also be used for modelling decorative shapes, and sets firm enough to be used for free-standing figures.

COATING WITH SUGARPASTE

Sugarpaste can be used to coat any cake, but for a fruit cake we recommend applying a layer of marzipan (almond paste) first (page 13). For sponge cakes, the sugarpaste can be applied directly to the cake, with just a thin masking of apricot glaze (page13) or buttercream.

Whatever type and shape of cake you are covering, the first step is to colour the sugarpaste (if necessary), and then to roll it out. Sugarpaste is available in many colours as well as in white, and you can create the exact colour required by kneading in liquid or paste food colourings. Colouring techniques such as marbling and stencilling (pages 25 and 46) can greatly enhance the appearance of the finished cake.

Sugarpaste should preferably be rolled out with a non-stick rolling pin on a non-stick board, using a little icing (confectioners') sugar to prevent sticking. You should use the least amount of icing sugar possible, especially when rolling paste for the top surface of the cake. *Never use cornflour* for rolling out sugarpaste for coating as cornflour is uncooked starch which, when mixed with moisture and sugar, can cause the marzipan to ferment, and the sugarpaste to lift and crack.

COATING THE CAKE

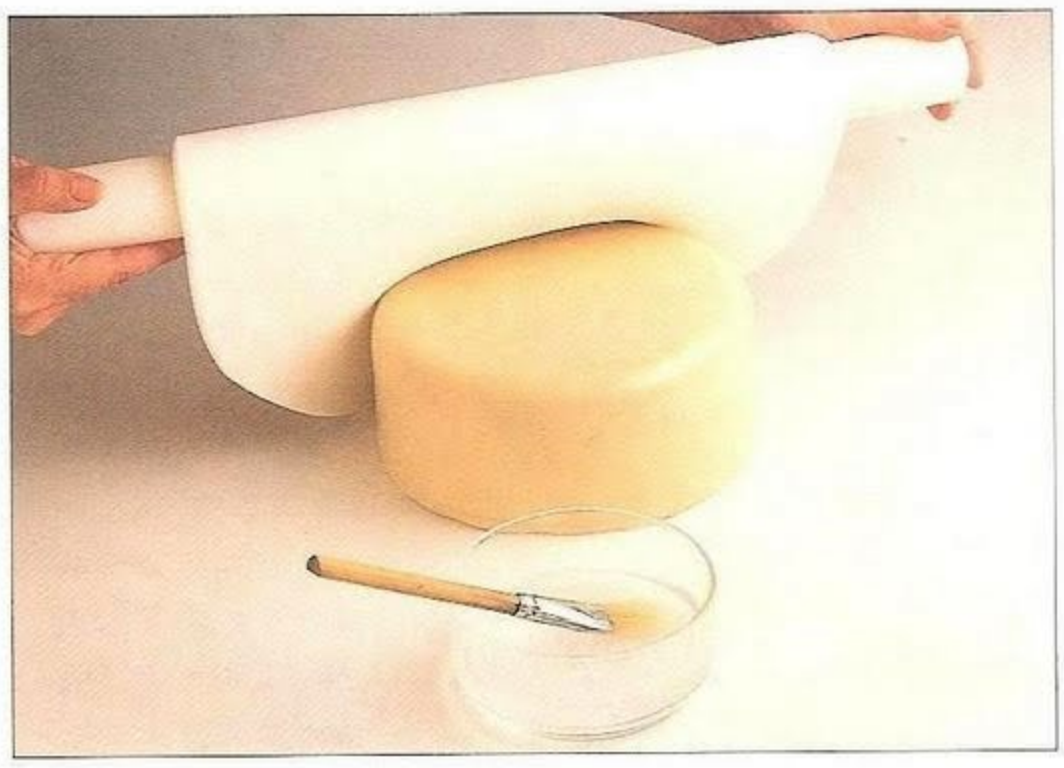
1 For a fruit cake, brush the surface of the marzipan with cool boiled water or clear alcohol (gin or vodka). If coating a sponge cake, brush the surface with boiled apricot glaze or spread with a thin layer of buttercream. Knead the required amount of sugarpaste with your hands to soften and give a smooth surface.

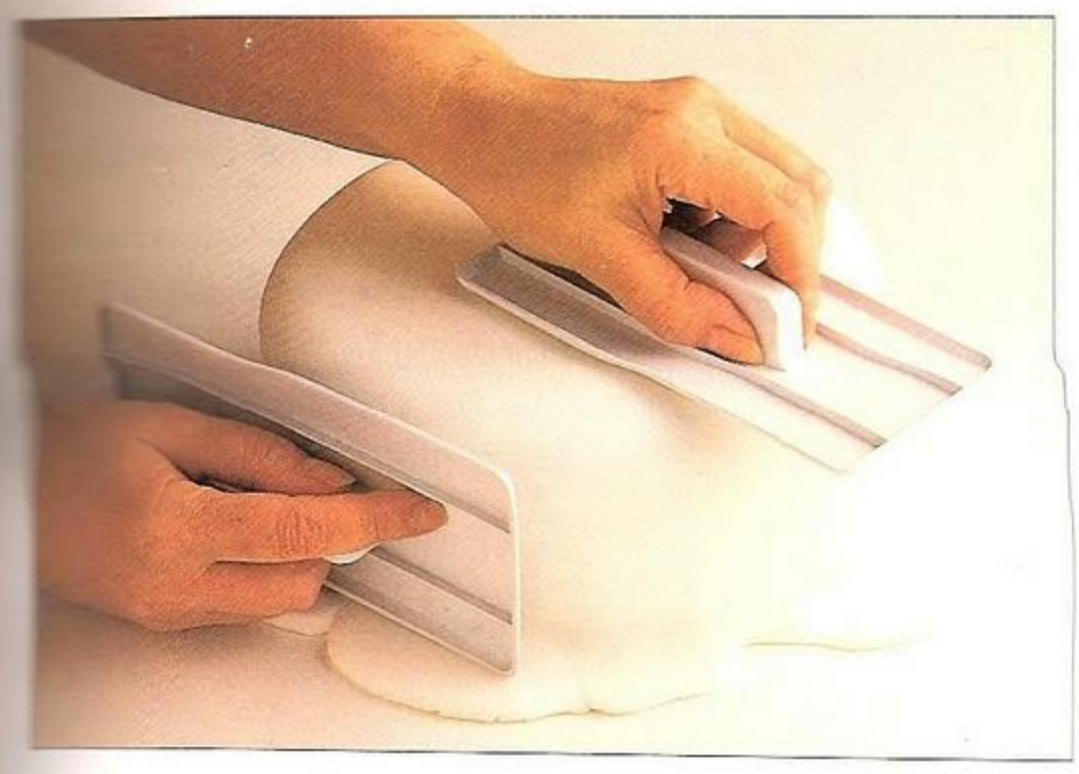
2 Measure the cake across the top and down both sides, and roll out the paste to fit, allowing an extra 2.5cm (1 inch) for trimming. The thicker the paste, the easier it will be to coat the cake, but bear in mind that a thick layer can be too sweet and overpower the flavours and textures of the cake and marzipan. We recommend rolling out the sugarpaste to a thickness of 5mm (¼ inch). Ensure that the paste does not stick to the board by turning the paste regularly as you roll it. Polish the surface of the sugarpaste with the flat of your hand to remove any excess icing sugar and to check that there are no air bubbles in the paste.

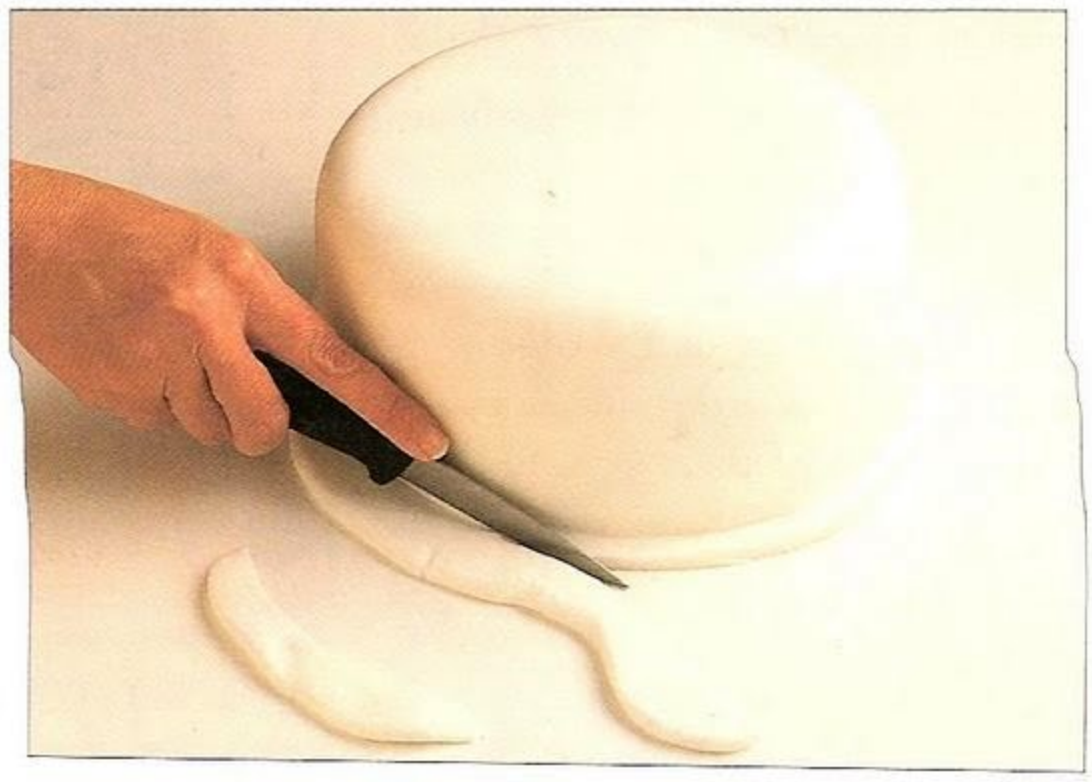
3 Lift the paste over the rolling pin, and use the rolling pin to position the paste on the side of the cake, over the top and down the other side.

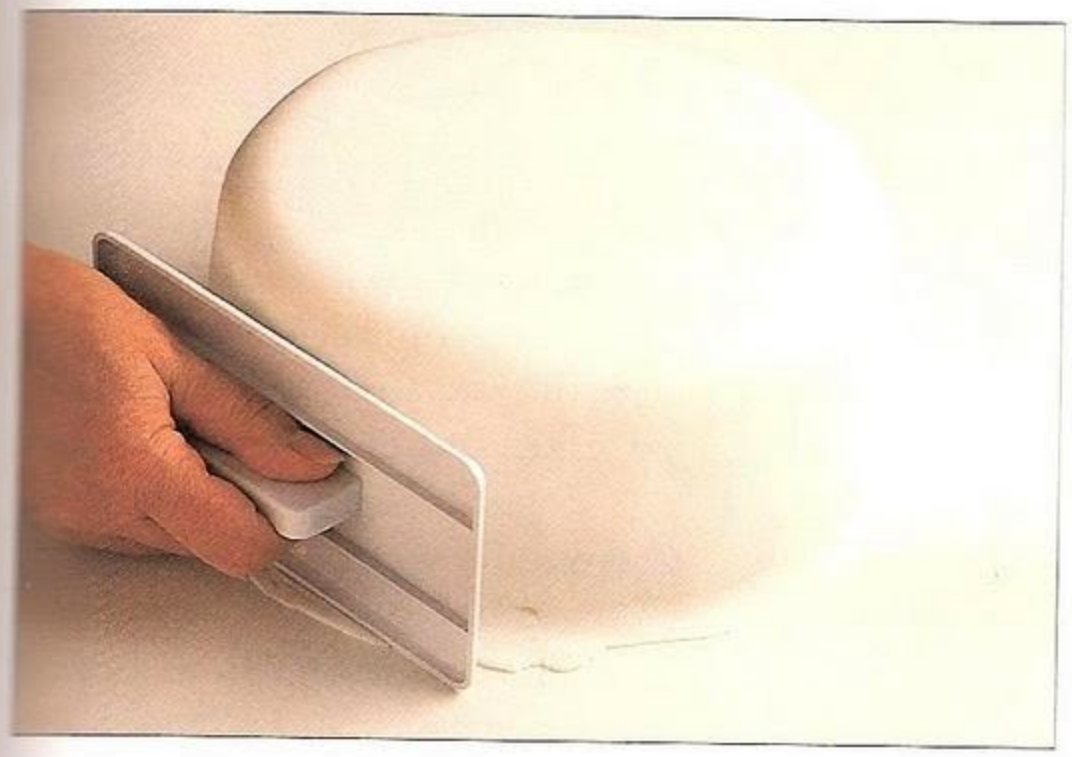
4 Smooth the top of the cake with the flat of your hand, starting from the centre and working outwards. This will ensure that you have not trapped any air between the sugarpaste and the surface beneath. If you do find an air bubble, either lift the paste up quickly with one hand and smooth down again with the other or, if the sugarpaste is now firmly stuck down, prick the bubble with a pin and smooth the hole with your fingertips.

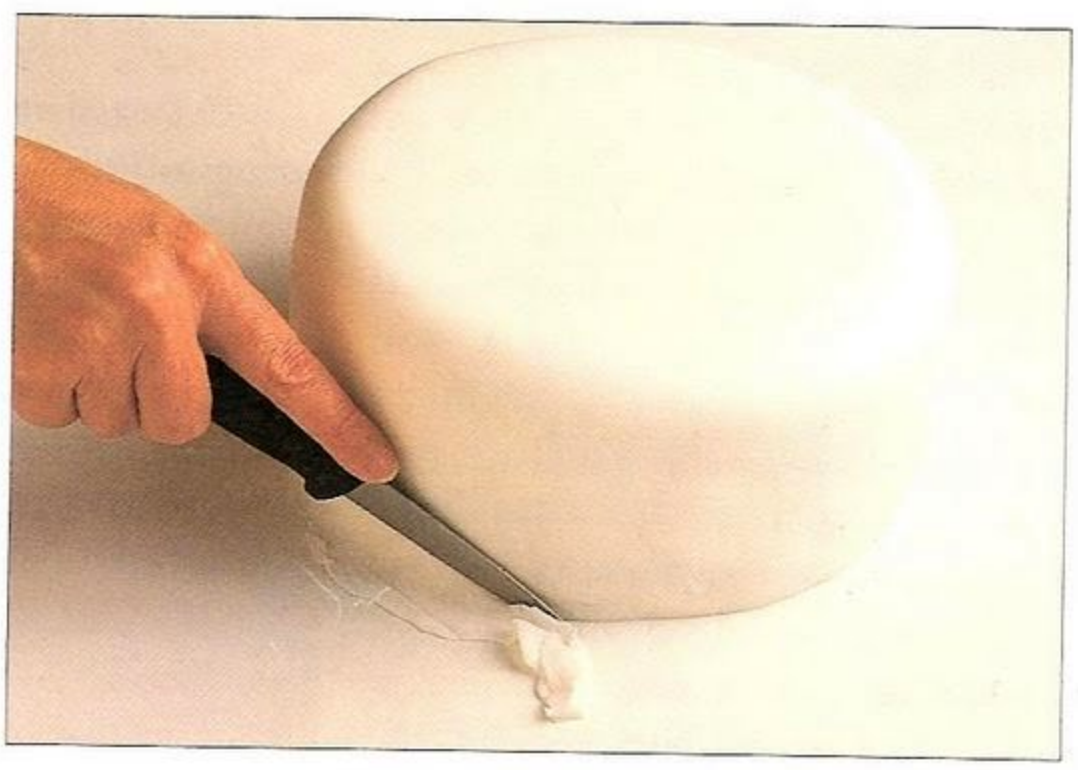
5 Work your way from the top of the cake down the sides, smoothing evenly. As folds in the sugarpaste appear, lift the bottom edge out to











remove the fold and then gently press the paste back on to the surface of the cake. Continue smoothing downwards, using icing polishers if desired.

6 Using a sharp knife, trim away the excess paste from around the bottom of the cake, leaving an overlap of 1cm (½ inch).

7 Smooth over the whole cake again with the flat of your hands or icing polishers, flattening the paste at the bottom of the cake to produce perpendicular sides.

8 Trim all round the bottom edge of the paste again to attain a clean, neat finish.

COATING THE BOARD

All cake boards and drums are finished with silver, gold or coloured metallic paper to provide a strong and hygienic surface on which to place your cake. Although the boards can be attractive and are sometimes incorporated in the overall design of the cake, it is common practice these days to coat the board as well as the cake with icing, giving the cake a more 'complete' appearance. You should ensure that the base of your cake is in contact with the hygienic surface of the board; decorative finishes, whether in sugar, paper or material, should only be applied to the area of the board around the cake base. Alternatively, place the cake on a thin board the same size as the cake before placing it on the coated drum or board.

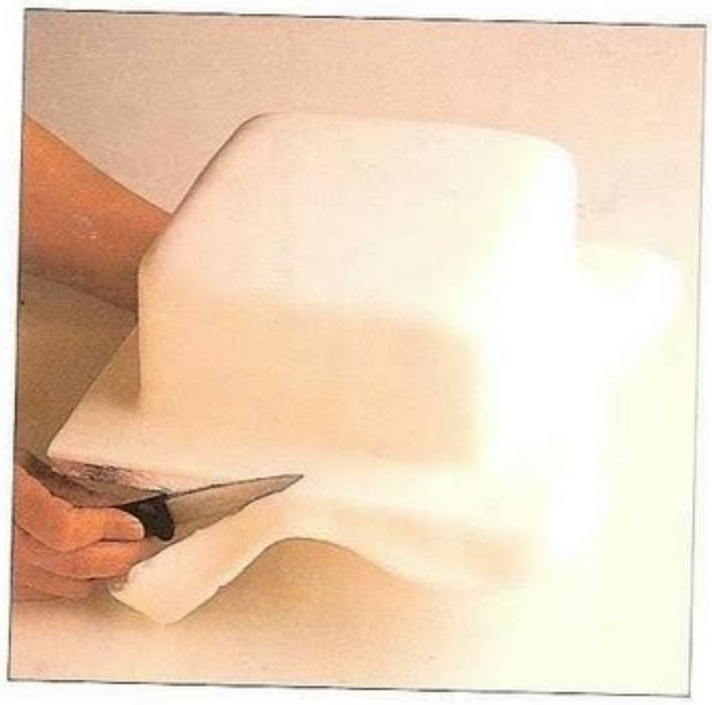
When cake and board are both covered, leave the sugarpaste to dry before decorating.

EXPERT ADVICE

When coating a cake with corners, roll out and apply the paste in the same way as for a round cake. Smooth the top first (step 4), then before smoothing the sides, make sure the sugarpaste is neatly fitted on to the corners. Smooth the sides in the same way as for a round cake, i.e. lift out and press in (step 5).

Cake and Board Together

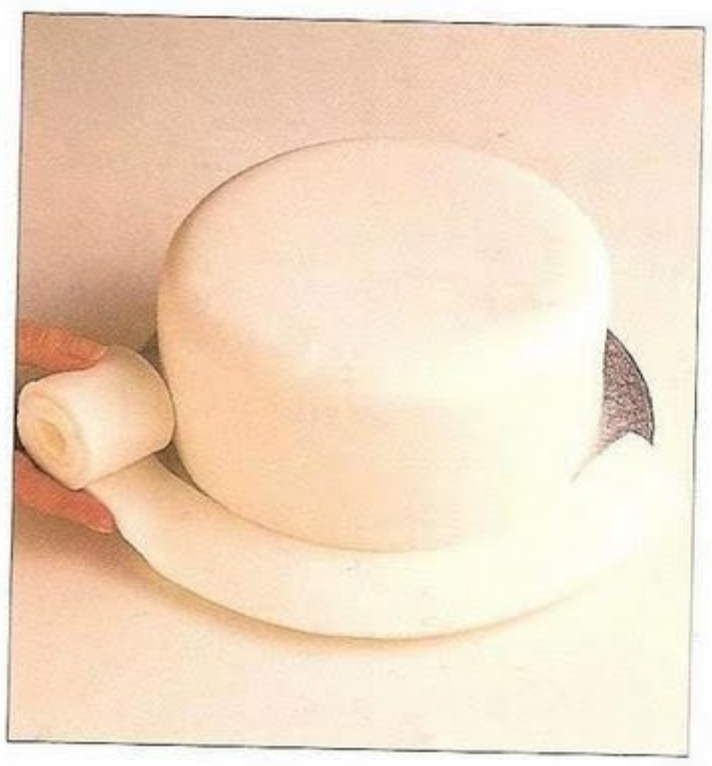
1 Place the cake on the board. Roll out the sugarpaste, allowing extra for the board. Lift the paste as if coating the cake, this time positioning the paste on the edge of the board first, then the side, top and opposite side of the cake, and finally, the far side of the board.



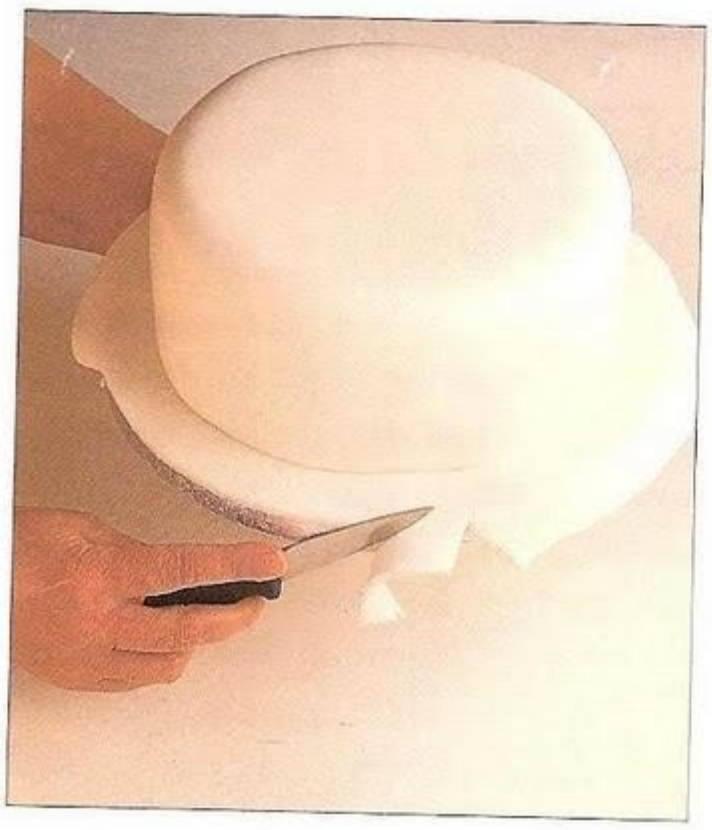
2 Smooth from the centre of the top of the cake, down the sides and finally over the board. Trim excess paste away from the edge of the board with a sharp knife.

Coating with a Strip of Paste

1 Coat the cake in sugarpaste as described on page 20, and place on a cake board (taking care not to mark the soft sugarpaste). Roll a sausage of sugarpaste with your hands, and then roll it into a strip with a rolling pin.



2 Use a tape measure or length of string to judge the length required. Trim the two long sides of the strip to the width required plus approximately 1cm (½ inch). Quickly roll up the strip, moisten the board with cool boiled water, and then unroll the paste directly on to the board.



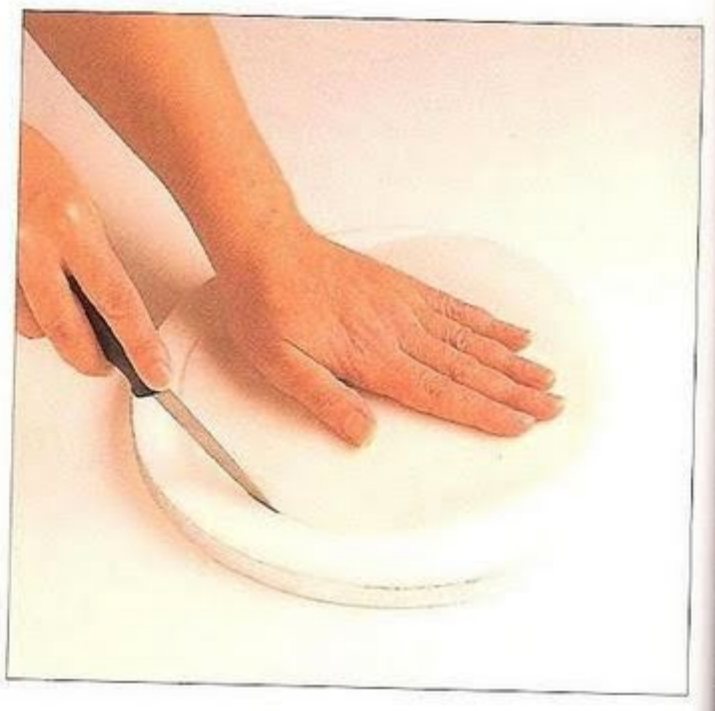
3 Cut the join to fit, and smooth the paste down with the pads of your fingers, particularly over the join. Trim as required around the board edge with a sharp knife. Finish by polishing the cut edge of the paste with the tips of your fingers.

EXPERT ADVICE

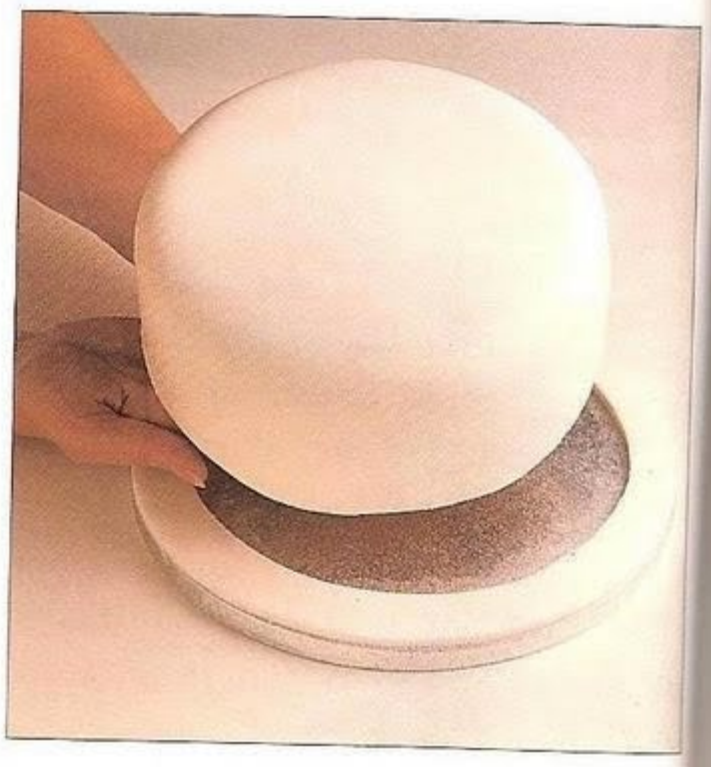
Cake drums are 1cm (½ inch) thick and are used for heavy fruit and other cakes where a firm supporting base is required. Cake boards (sometimes called double thick boards) are used for light fruit and sponge cakes.

Coating the Board and Removing the Centre

1 Coat the cake in sugarpaste as described on page 20, and allow to set firm overnight. Cut a paper template the size and shape of the coated cake. Brush *the edge only* of a cake board with cool boiled water. Roll out the sugarpaste and coat the surface of the board. Place the template where the cake will sit and cut around the edge with a sharp knife. Remove the template and the sugarpaste beneath it.



2 Lift the cake and lower it gently into the hole in the sugarpaste. Smooth the soft paste on the board into the join between it and the cake



Girl and Boy Cake

MATERIALS

1kg (2½lb) sugarpaste
Selection of food colourings
25cm (10 inch) square cake drum
Genoese sponge (page 10)
Apricot glaze (page 13) or buttercream (page 115)
Small amount of flower paste (page 84)

EQUIPMENT

Icing polishers
Dresden tool
Claygun, optional
Plunger blossom cutter

1 Colour 225g (8oz) sugarpaste green and use to coat the cake drum, including the edges.

2 Make paper templates of the girl and boy (page 131), and place on the Genoese. Cut around the outlines with a sharp knife. Carve away the Genoese not required, following the templates and the photographs above). Mask the cake with apricot glaze or buttercream.

3 Coat both shapes in a thin layer of flesh-coloured sugarpaste, pressing the paste into the carved layers with your fingertips.

4 For the girl, make a petticoat in white sugarpaste, place on the cake, and cut to fit. Use a dresden tool to mark in the grooves. Use blue sugarpaste to make the dress, and fit into position, trimming as required. For the boy, cut and fit green socks with blue tops, and texture with the dresden tool. Add blue shorts and a green and white striped shirt made using inlay techniques (page 26). Texture the bottom welt of the shirt with the dresden tool.

5 Next, for the girl, add an apron, collar, arms and shoes. Add the boy's collar and arrange his left arm to hold a brown paste ball.

6 To make the girl's hair, roll some long, thin strands of a half-and-half mixture of sugarpaste and flower paste. (Use a claygun if you have one.) Plait the strands into pigtails and position on the girl's head. Paint facial features on both figures; finish the girl by adding flowers, and the boy by adding his hair and boots.

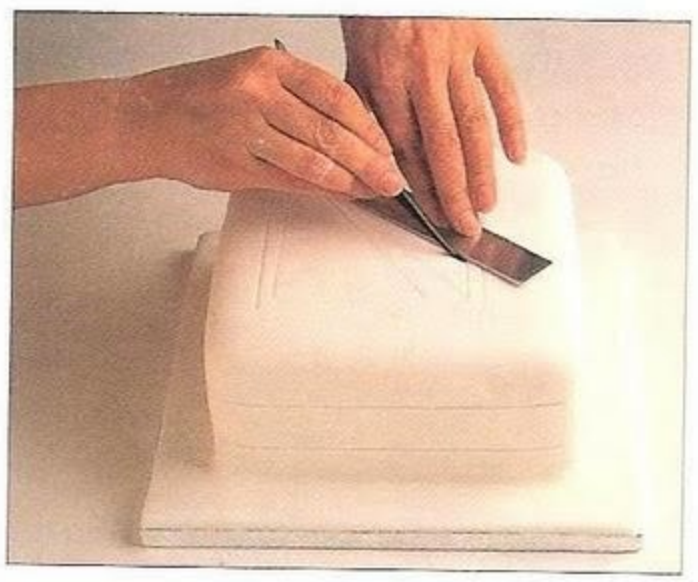
7 Lift the girl and boy into position on the coated drum.

DECORATING WITH SUGARPASTE

Sugarpaste can be used in a huge variety of ways to add decorative touches to a cake, ranging from simple embossing and crimping to more advanced inlay work, broderie anglaise and stencilling. Many of the techniques in this chapter are derived from other crafts, such as needlework and leatherwork, but all adapt beautifully to sugarpaste.

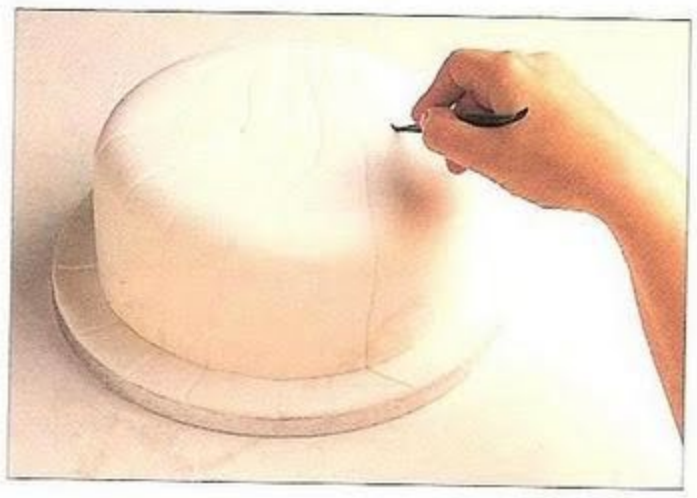
SCRIBING

This technique is carried out when the sugarpaste coating on a cake is still soft. It makes use of the effect of shadows in grooves marked in the sugarpaste with a veining tool. Plan your pattern on paper first because if you make a mistake you will have to recoat the cake.



STRAIGHT-LINE SCRIBING Use an icing ruler and a veining tool to draw a variety of straight lines across the surface of the cake. This technique is used to great effect on the Sunburst Cake (right).

FREEHAND SCRIBING Curved lines can be scribed freehand on to the cake's surface. The lines can be continued from the board, up the side



of the cake, across the top, and down the other side to create one overall design.

Sunburst Cake

MATERIALS

20cm (8 inch) square cake
Apricot glaze (page 13)
1kg (2lb) marzipan (almond paste)
25cm (10 inch) square cake drum
1kg (2lb) sugarpaste, coloured with melon paste food colouring
Selection of food colourings
Clear alcohol (gin or vodka)

EQUIPMENT

Icing polishers
Veining tool
Icing ruler
5cm (2 inch) round cutter
Piece of sponge

1 Brush the cake with apricot glaze and coat with marzipan (page 13). Leave to set for a few hours. Place on the cake drum.

2 Coat the cake and cake drum (including the edges) in sugarpaste (page 22).

3 Using a veining tool and icing ruler, draw a line in the sugarpaste 2.5cm (1 inch) up from the base of the cake. Draw another line 2.5cm (1 inch) above the first. This produces the 'ribbon' border.

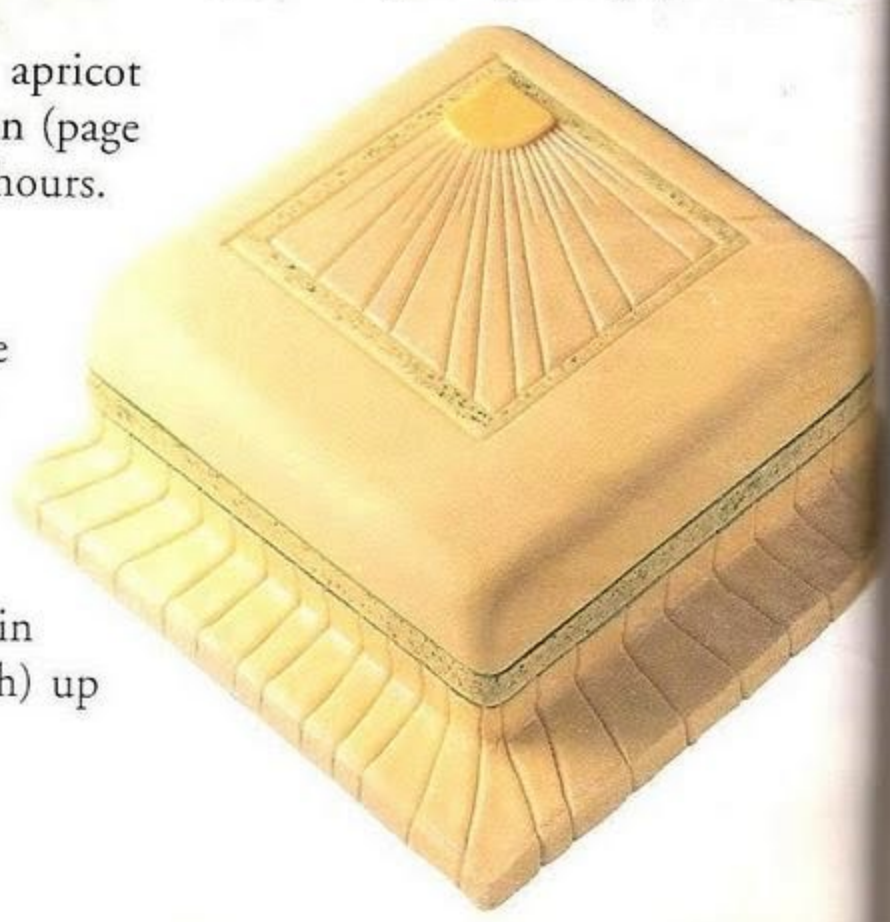
4 Again using the ruler and veining tool, draw a square on the top of the cake, positioning it towards one corner. Draw another square 1cm (½ inch) outside the first.

5 Scribe lines from the bottom of the side border, down the sides of the cake, across the board and then down the edges of the board.

6 Scribe in sunray lines from one corner of the square pattern, using the ruler to keep them straight.

7 Cut a circle of yellow sugarpaste, approximately 5cm (2 inches) in diameter, and cut into quarters. Attach one quarter in the corner of the square on the top of the cake.

8 To complete, colour the borders on the top and sides of the cake, using the sponging technique (page 25), masking uncoloured areas with pieces of greaseproof paper.



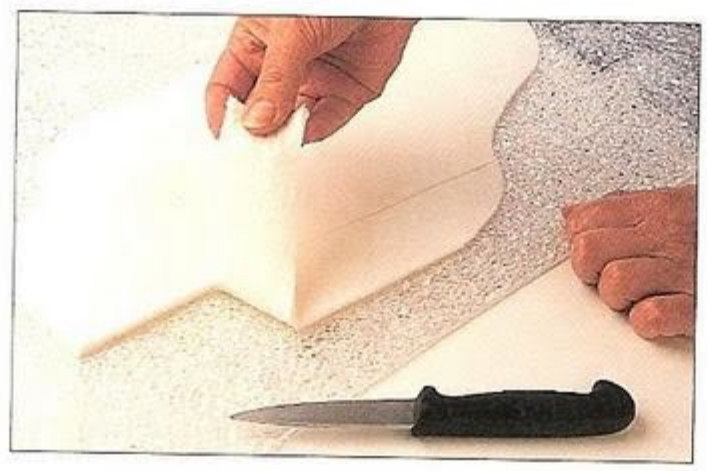
SPONGING

Sponging is a useful technique to use when you need to make colour changes on a cake after the base colour has been applied. Fading effects are also possible, and sponging with masks, templates and stencils gives a wide range of finishes.

1 Mix liquid, paste or powder food colouring (petal dust/blossom tint) with alcohol (gin or vodka) to the required colour. Tear a small piece of sponge from a larger block, dip it into the colour and squeeze the sponge. Test the effect by dabbing the sponge over a spare piece of sugarpaste before applying to the finished surface.

2 Mask off any areas you don't want coloured with a paper template. Sponge until the area is covered as required.

3 Remove the mask to reveal the unsponged area, taking care not to smudge the colour. Leave to dry.

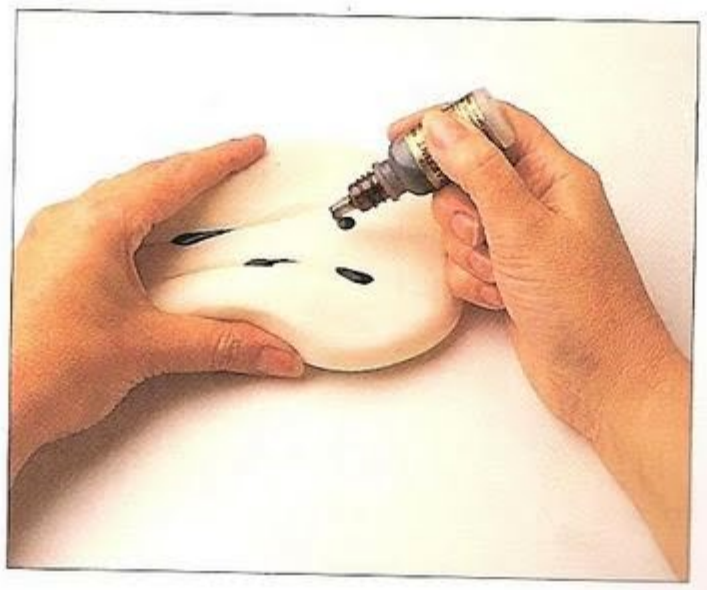


TEXTURING IN SHEETS

Fine texturing can be achieved over large areas of cake by using perspex sheeting. Ensure that the perspex sheet is clean and polished dry with a clean tea-towel. Roll the sugarpaste out on a non-stick board to the thickness required. Lift the sugarpaste with the aid of the rolling pin on to the perspex sheet, and roll once only, using medium pressure. Cut out the required shapes of textured sugarpaste and lift them away from the perspex.

MARBLING

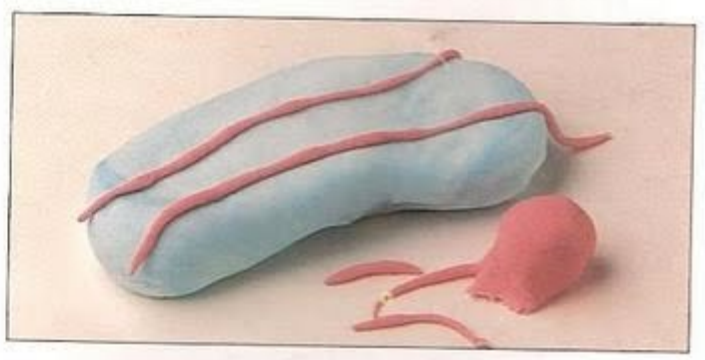
Sugarpaste is so easy to colour that many exciting effects can be achieved by blending and half-blending colours into the paste, creating a 'marbled' appearance.



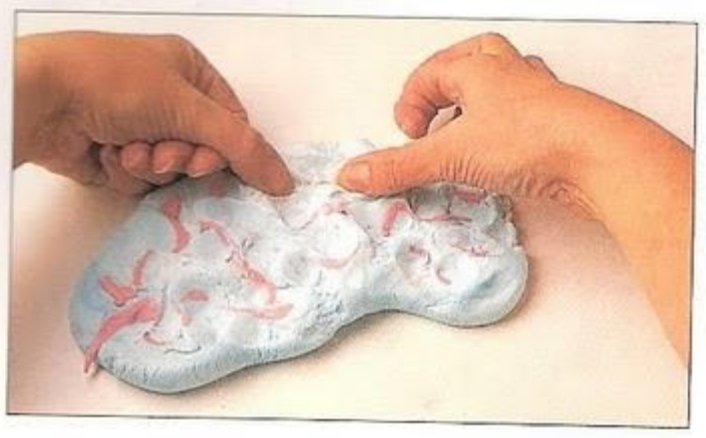
1 Knead the required amount of sugarpaste well and drop on liquid or paste colouring. Fold the sugarpaste, twisting occasionally, until the colour starts to spread through the paste in streaks.

2 Roll out the sugarpaste on a non-stick surface. Roll particularly firmly in the direction in which you wish the streaks to run.

3 Further effects can be achieved by using a coloured or marbled piece of sugarpaste, and then applying strips of differently coloured sugarpaste to it.

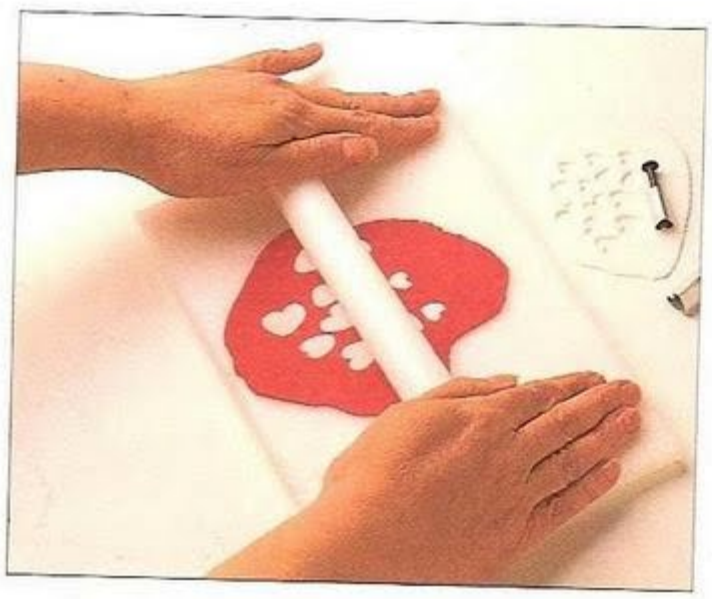


4 Work the strips into the main piece of sugarpaste with your fingers and thumbs, pressing the coloured paste into a marbled effect. Roll out and polish as required.

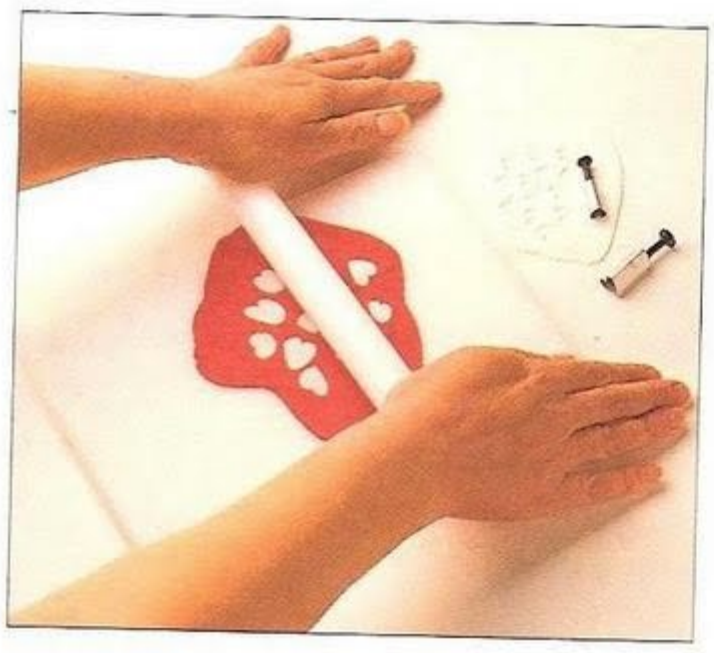


INLAY WORK

Patterns can be created over the whole surface of a cake by inlaying pieces of sugarpaste into the base coating. This technique is also useful for smaller patterned shapes which can be cut out and applied to the cake.



1 Colour the background sugarpaste and roll out to the required size. Cover with a sheet of clingfilm (plastic wrap) to stop the sugarpaste drying out. Cut the patterning pieces out of another piece of sugarpaste in a contrasting colour, and arrange these on the background sugarpaste (from which you have removed the clingfilm). Roll the paste once in one direction.



2 Roll the paste again, in the opposite direction, to even up the patterned pieces. Apply immediately to the cake or prepared surface.

3 The inlay technique can be used to create many different patterns and effects.

Clown Cake

MATERIALS

20cm (8 inch) round cake
Apricot glaze (page 13)
1kg (2lb) marzipan (almond paste)
Icing (confectioners') sugar
1kg (2lb) sugarpaste
Selection of food colourings
25cm (10 inch) round cake drum
Clear alcohol (gin or vodka)
Ribbon to trim cake drum

EQUIPMENT

Set of plain round cutters
Icing polishers
Clown cutter (Cake Art)
Set of scalloped round cutters
No. 0 paintbrush

1 Brush the cake with apricot glaze, and coat with marzipan using the top and sides method on page 14 to obtain a 90° angle at the top edge.

2 Roll out some white sugarpaste. Brush the top of the cake only with cool boiled water, and coat with sugarpaste, trimming around the edge carefully with a knife.

3 Roll out a sheet of sugarpaste, slightly longer than the circumference and slightly wider than the depth of the cake. Following the techniques for inlay work (left), create the spotted pattern. Brush the sides of the cake with cool boiled water and apply the spotted paste, fitting the bottom in neatly, trimming the join and finally trimming the top edge. Polish well and leave to dry before placing the cake on the cake drum and coating the board using the strip method (page 22).

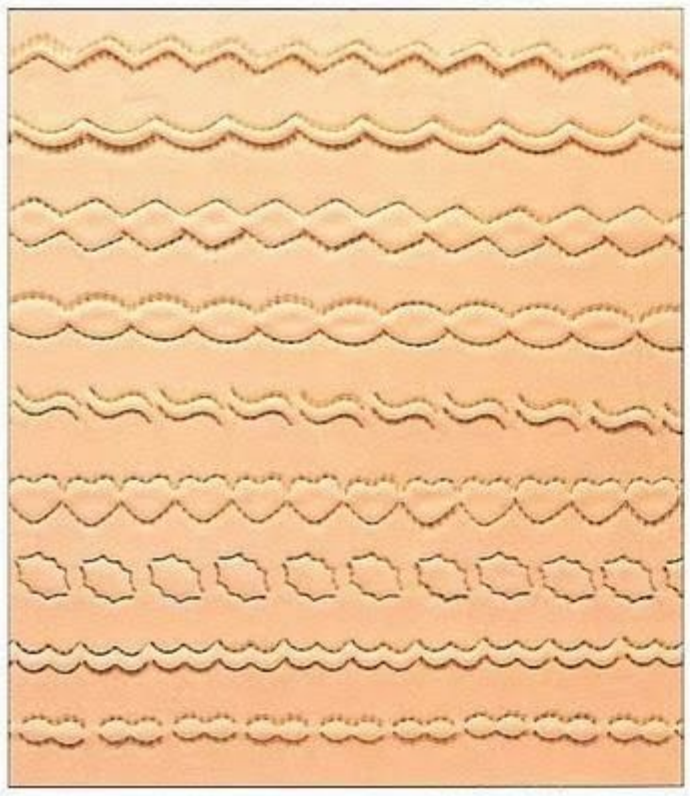
4 The clown is made using a commercial cutter. The base shape is cut out as one piece of white sugarpaste and the various parts of the clothing and body added afterwards, colouring small pieces of sugarpaste as you need them. To create stripes or checks for the clown's trousers, roll out the base colour sugarpaste, then roll out some sugarpaste thinly in a contrasting colour and cut into strips or small squares. Moisten very slightly and place on the base colour sugarpaste, arranging in stripes or a chequered design. Roll over in both directions, then cut as required.

5 The hair is made by pushing coloured sugarpaste through a sieve. The facial features are painted on with a fine paintbrush (no. 0 or smaller), using liquid colours or paste colours mixed with alcohol.

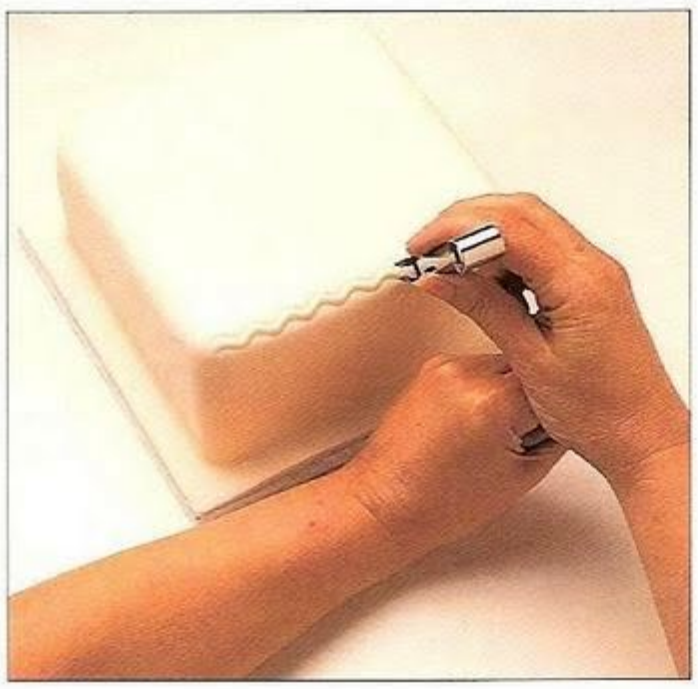
6 A twisted rope of sugarpaste (page 35) is applied to the bottom edge of the cake, glued in position with a little cool boiled water. To make the top 'circus ring', roll a long sausage of sugarpaste and form it into a ring. Smooth the join. Moisten the top edge of the cake and position the ring.

CRIMPING

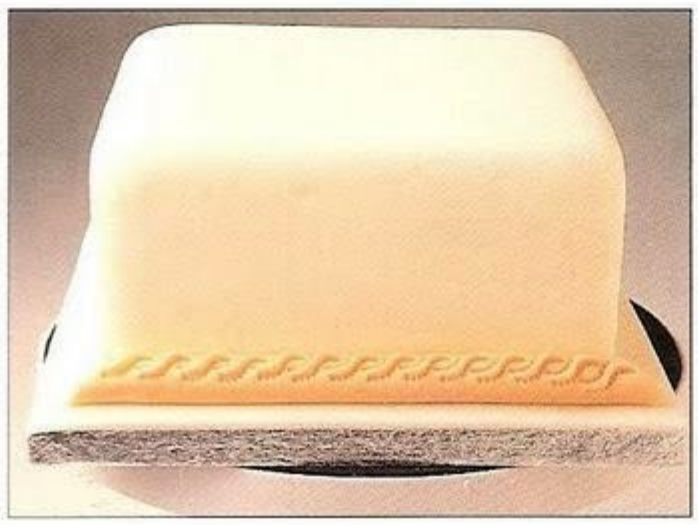
One of the oldest decorating techniques, originally called 'pinching' and used on marzipan, has now been updated and modernized with many new jaw designs and a transfer from brass to stainless steel tools.



CRIMPED PATTERNS Here is a selection of patterns created with different crimpers. Note how the shapes cast shadows.



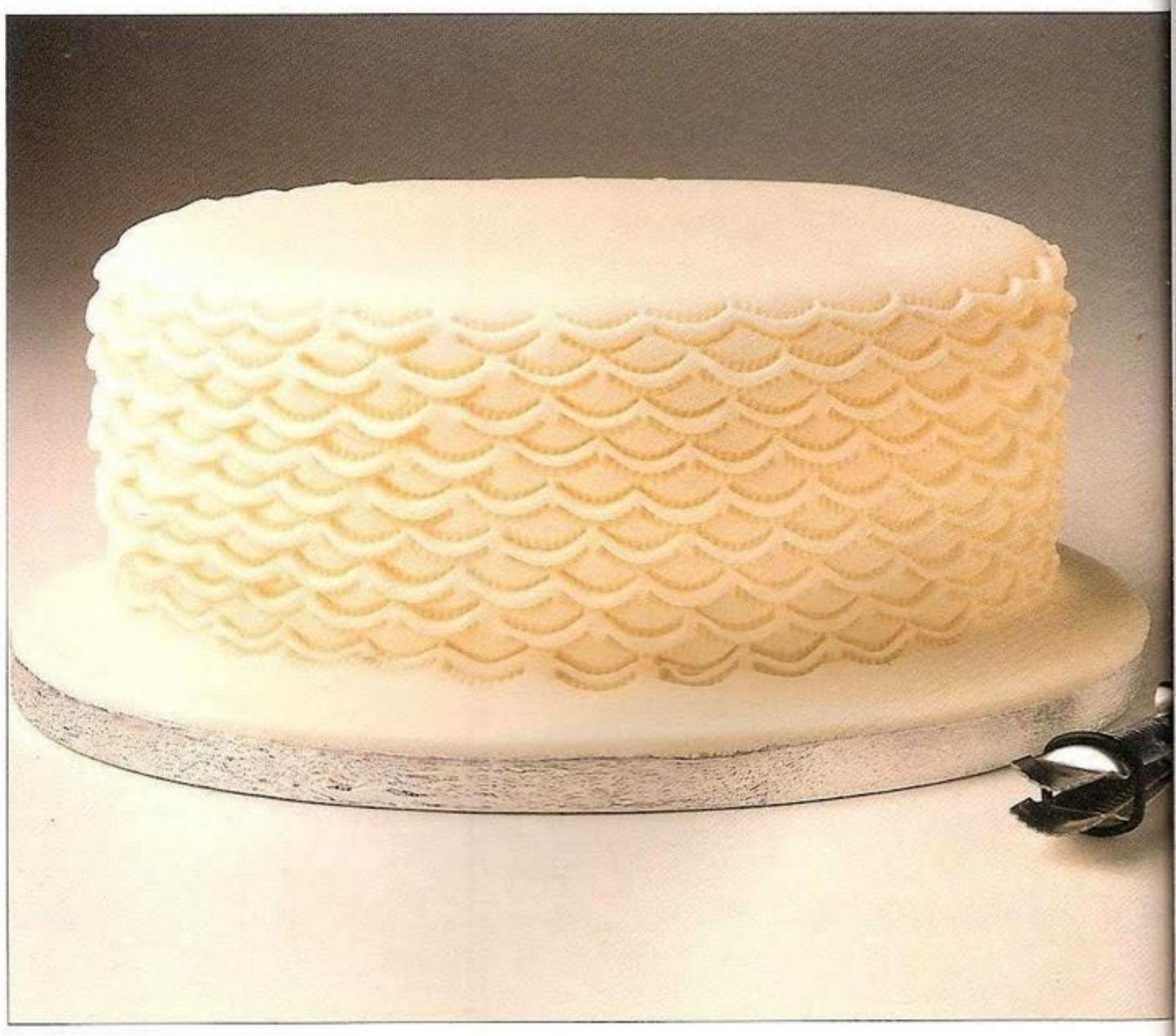
TOP-EDGE CRIMPING Crimping around the top edge of a cake as soon as the sugarpaste coating has been applied gives a quick, easy finish which resembles a piped royal icing finish (which would be much more time-consuming).



CRIMPED ROPES Rope effects can be achieved by crimping sausages of sugarpaste positioned around the base of the cake.

BOTTOM-EDGE CRIMPING A quick way of sealing the cake to the cake drum or board is to crimp the bottom edge. An attractive pattern is achieved at the same time.

CRIMPING LARGE AREAS Crimping is generally used in lines, and yet beautiful padded and textured effects can be achieved by building up patterns of crimping. With about 20 different crimpers available, many interesting alternatives are possible. Set the jaws of the crimper at the correct width (often a rubber band is supplied to help with this) and push into the sugarpaste. Squeeze gently, release the pressure and remove the crimper. To stop the crimper sticking to the sugarpaste, either dip the jaws into cornflour or wipe regularly with a barely damp, clean cloth. Alternatively, smear the jaws with a little white vegetable fat (shortening).

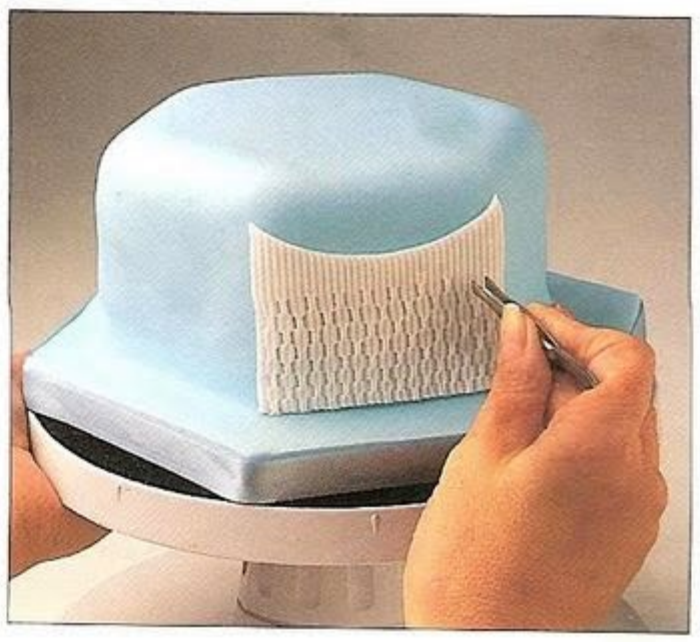


SMOCKING

This very attractive technique is adapted from needlecraft. The effect can be achieved with or without the use of piped royal icing.

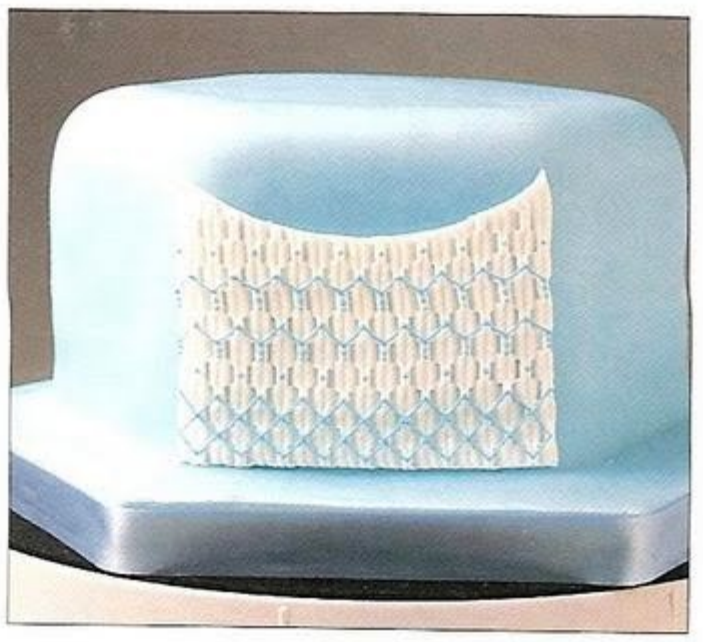
1 Make a template of the area you wish to cover. Roll out sugarpaste to 2.5mm (⅛ inch) thick with a plain rolling pin, and roll again using a smocking or ribbed rolling pin. Use medium pressure to obtain deep ribs and to thin the paste to approximately 1.75mm (1/16 inch). Place the template on the paste and cut around the edge with a sharp knife.

2 Moisten the back of the smocked paste with a little cool boiled water, and place in position on the cake.



3 Using ordinary tweezers or smocking tweezers, pinch in the pattern while the sugarpaste is still soft. Leave to harden.

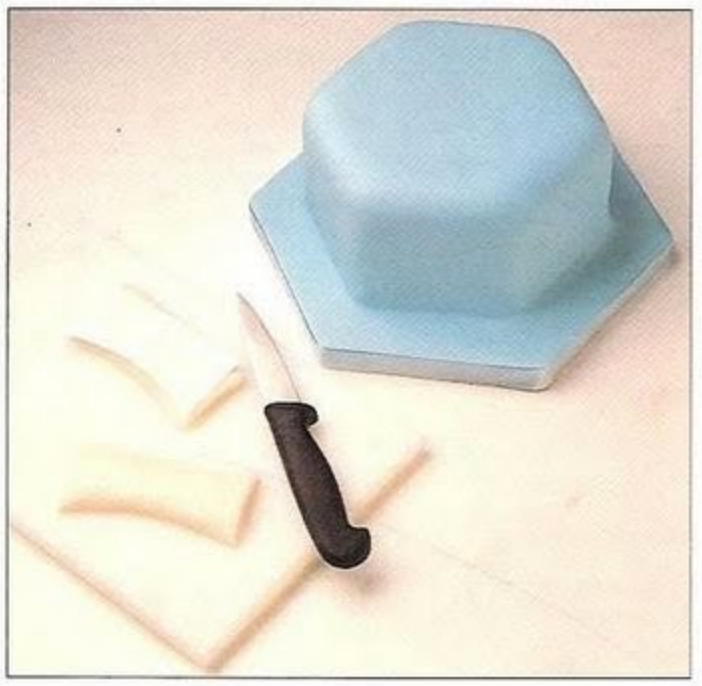
4 Colour royal icing as required and pipe in the stitch patterns with a no. 1 or no. 2 tube (tip). Leave to dry.



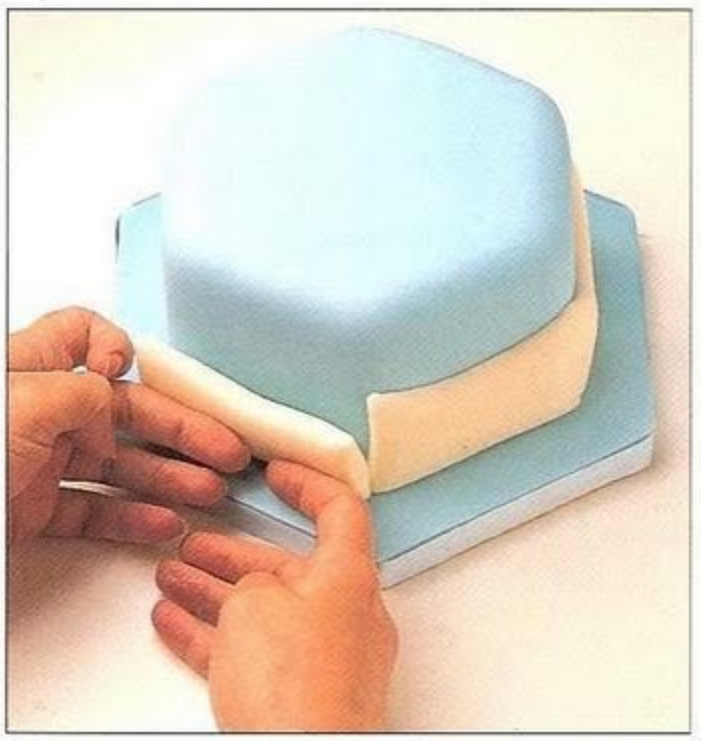
5 Finish the cut edge of the smocked area neatly. Here, a Garrett frill (page 38) and piped royal icing have been used.

QUILTING

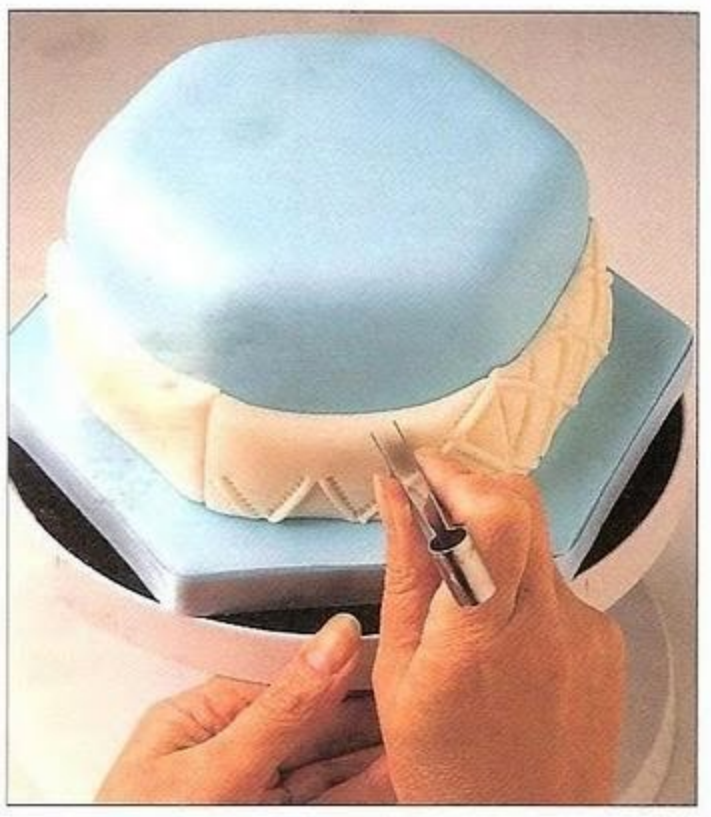
This technique, derived from needlecraft, is an effective way of combining crimping and patterning skills.



1 Make a template of the area you wish to cover with the quilting. Roll out sugarpaste to approximately 5mm (¼ inch) thick, and cut around the template with a sharp knife. Smooth the edges of the shape and press lightly to create a cushion effect. Trim to the required shape again, and smooth with fingertips to soften the cut edges. Be careful not to distort the shape.



2 Moisten the back of the shape with a little cool boiled water and gently lift into position.



3 Using a large straight crimper, crimp a quilted pattern on to the padded paste. Add dots to the pattern with the end of a paintbrush (see TIM Birthday Cake, opposite).

TIM Birthday Cake

MATERIALS

15cm (6 inch) hexagonal cake, measured point to point
Apricot glaze (page 13)
700g (1½lb) marzipan (almond paste)
20cm (8 inch) round or hexagonal cake drum, measured straight edge to straight edge
Icing (confectioners') sugar
450g (1lb) pale blue sugarpaste
225g (8oz) cream or champagne sugarpaste
Small amount of darker blue flower paste (page 84) for 'ribbon'
Small amount of royal icing made with pure albumen (page 50)
Ribbon (sugar or fabric) to trim cake drum

EQUIPMENT

Icing polishers
Large straight crimper
Icing ruler
Tailor's wheel, optional
Single ribbon insertion tool
Bow cutter, optional
Dresden tool

1 Brush the cake with apricot glaze and coat in marzipan, using the all-in-one method (page 13). Leave to crust overnight.

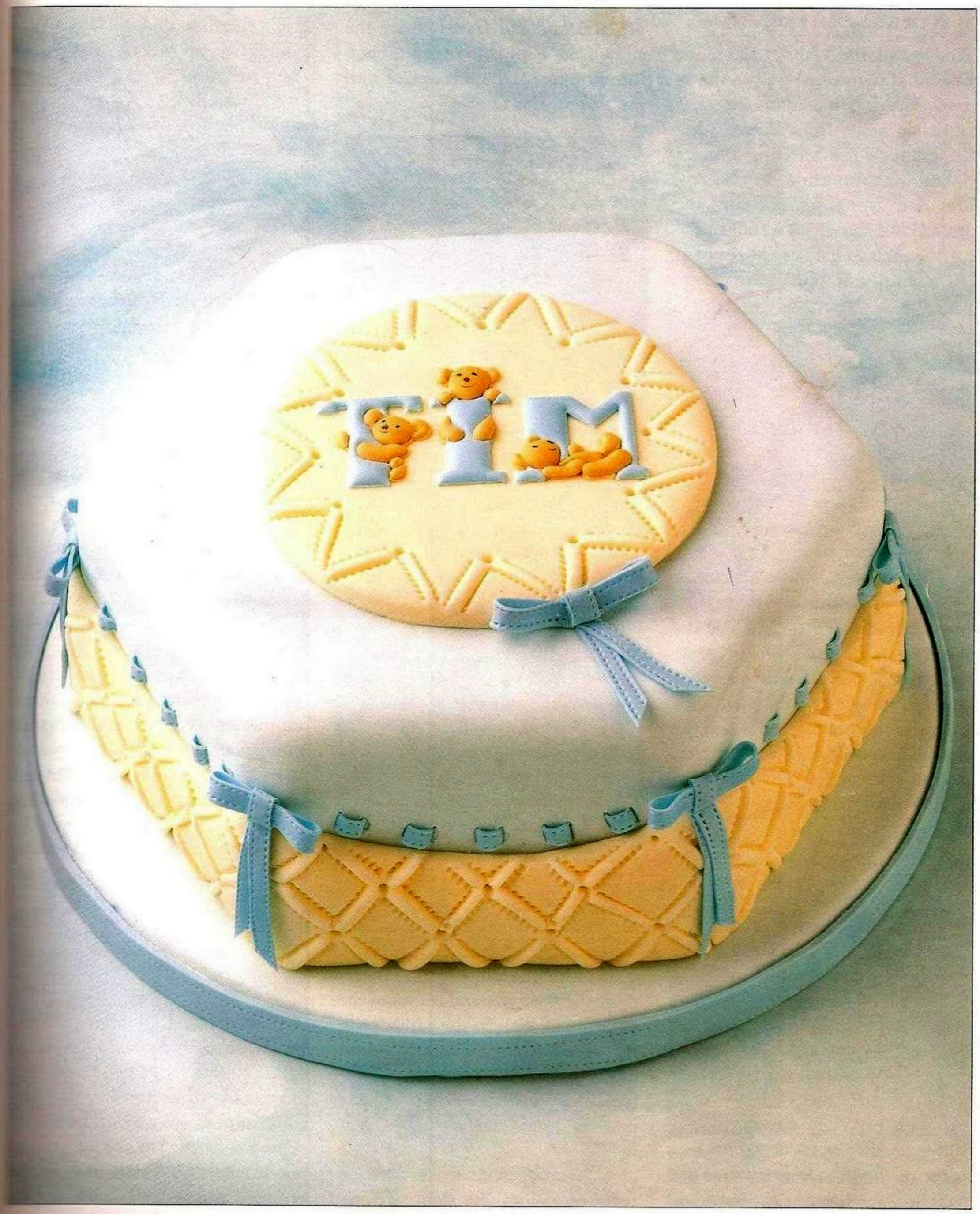
2 Place the cake on the cake drum, brush the marzipan with cool boiled water, and coat the cake and drum in pale blue sugarpaste (page 22).

3 Quilt the sides of the cake with cream or champagne sugarpaste as shown left. Using the same quilting techniques, cut a disc of sugarpaste 1cm (½ inch) thick, and round the edges with your fingertips. Place in the centre of the top of the cake, securing with cool boiled water, and quilt the edge to match the sides of the cake.

4 Apply the sugar ribbon insertion and bows while the sugarpaste is still workable (pages 32–33).

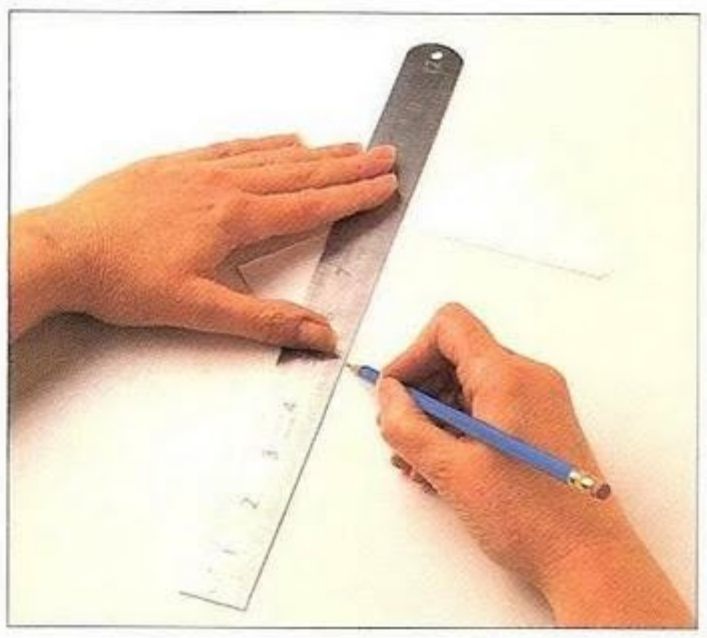
5 Using templates from page 132, make the runout letters (page 71) for the top of the cake, and leave to dry for 24 hours. Arrange the dried letters on the cake and when you have them in the correct position, fix to the cake with a small amount of soft royal icing.

6 Complete the presentation with a ribbon, either fabric or sugar (flower paste), attached to the edge of the cake drum.

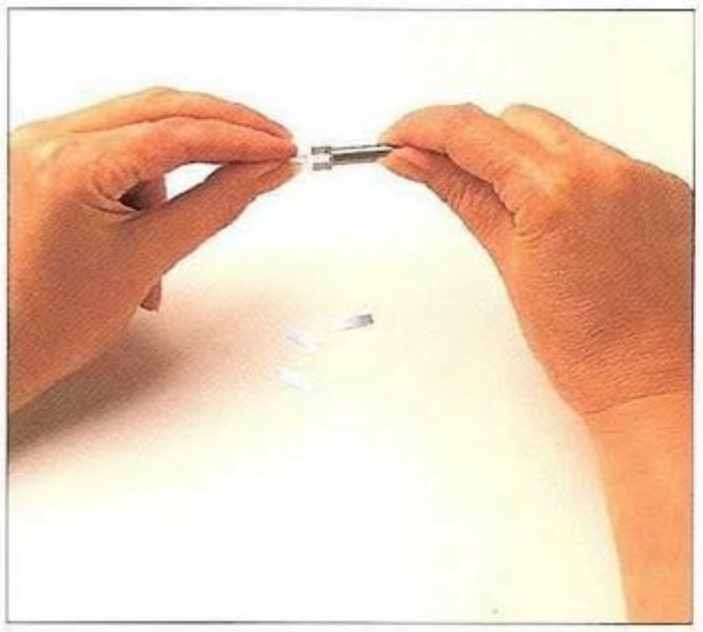

EM

RIBBON INSERTION

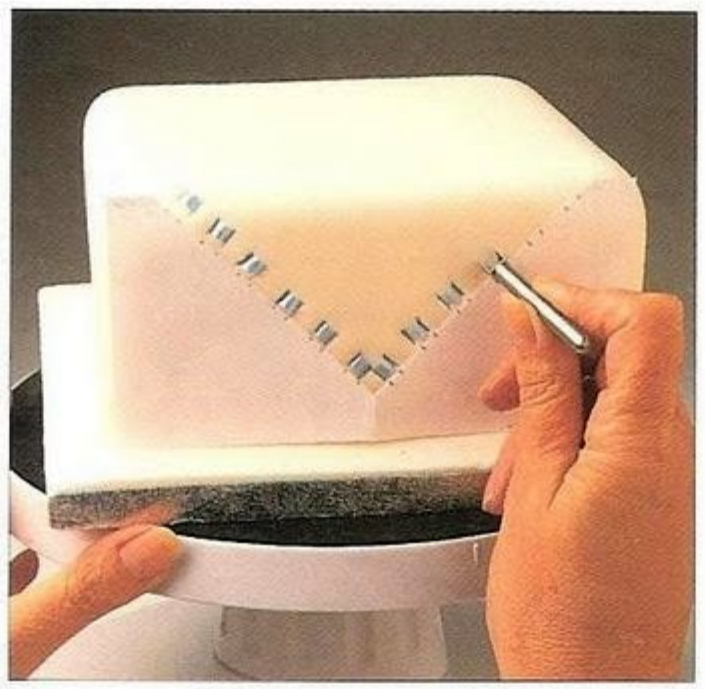
This is another fabric technique which has transferred well to sugarpaste. The ribbon used can be either fabric or made from flower paste (page 84). When selecting a fabric ribbon for this technique, choose a firm one. To ensure neat cuts, the coated cake should be left until the surface of the sugarpaste has crusted but it is still soft underneath.



1 Make a paper template of the shape required, and make evenly spaced pencil marks along its edge corresponding to the required length of the ribbon inserts and the gaps in between. Place the template on the cake and hold in position with a small amount of masking tape.



2 Cut the ribbon to the required lengths, ensuring that the cut edges are neat and not frayed. Place the ribbon in a double-edged ribbon insertion tool and hold in place with the tips of your fingers.



3 Gently press the ribbon insertion tool into the sugarpaste, using the marked template as a guide. The tool will cut the sugarpaste and push the ribbon into the cake at the same time. Lift the tool away.

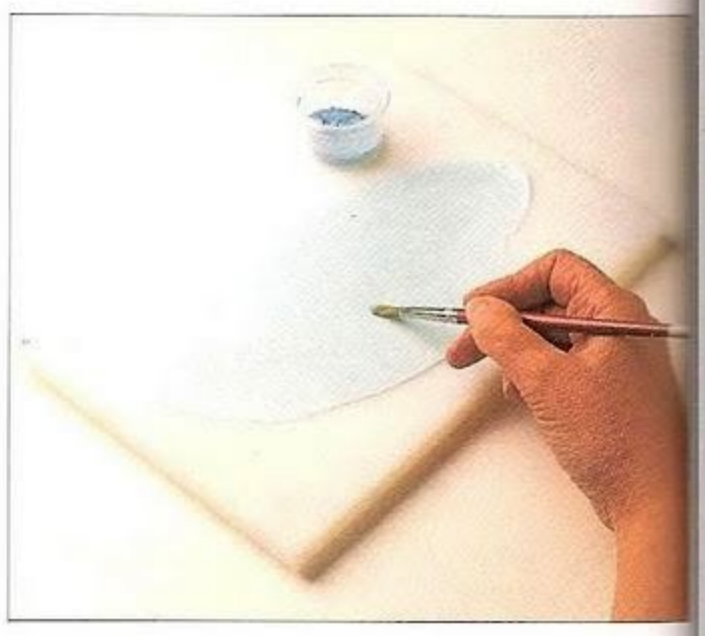
EXPERT ADVICE

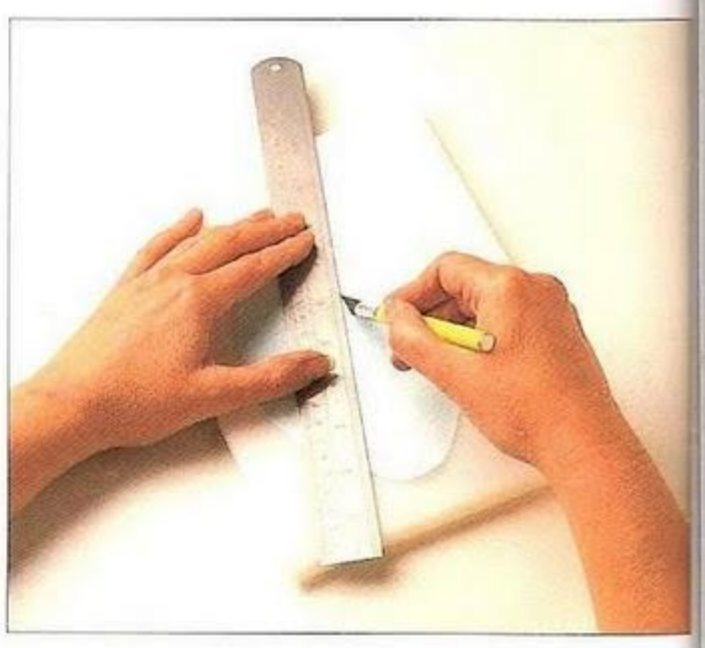
If you use fabric ribbon on a cake, ensure that it is all removed before the cake is cut as it is not edible and can cause choking.

SUGAR RIBBON INSERTION

This technique allows you to determine the exact size and colour of the ribbon you wish to use rather than relying on what fabric ribbons you can obtain in the shops. Sugar ribbons should be made from flower paste (page 84).

1 Colour some flower paste as required and roll out thinly. To create a silky effect, dust the surface with an edible lustre powder (petal dust/blossom tint), such as silver snowflake.



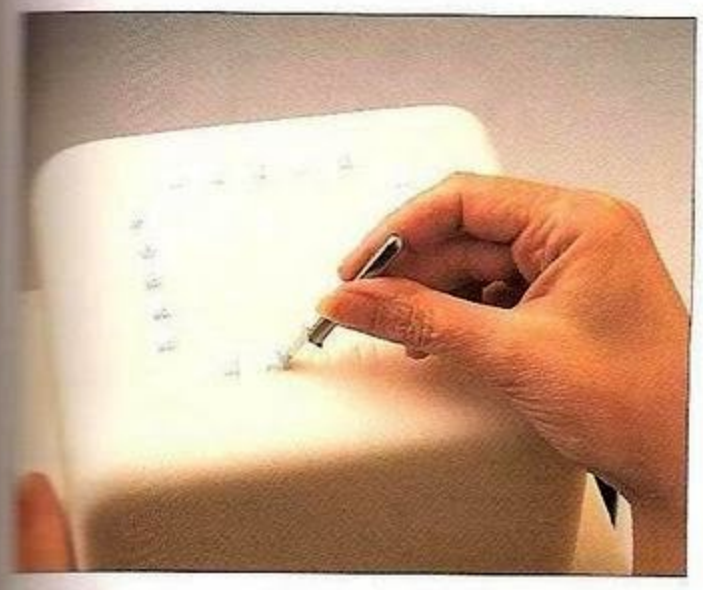


2 Using a metal ruler to guide you, cut the paste into strips with a scalpel. Mark a line of 'stitches' just inside each edge of each strip using a tailor's wheel (optional). Cover the strips of paste with clingfilm (plastic wrap) to prevent them drying out.

3 Make a paper template of the required shape and make evenly

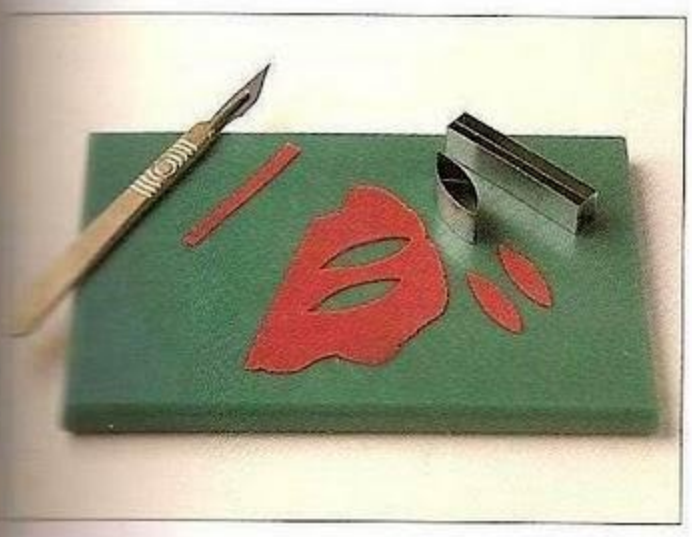
spaced pencil marks along its edges to act as a guide for the ribbon inserts. Hold the template in position and cut slits in the surface of the sugarpaste with a single ribbon insertion tool or a scalpel. Remove the template.

4 Cut the strips of paste to the required lengths and, with the aid of the single ribbon insertion tool, push the paste into the slots.

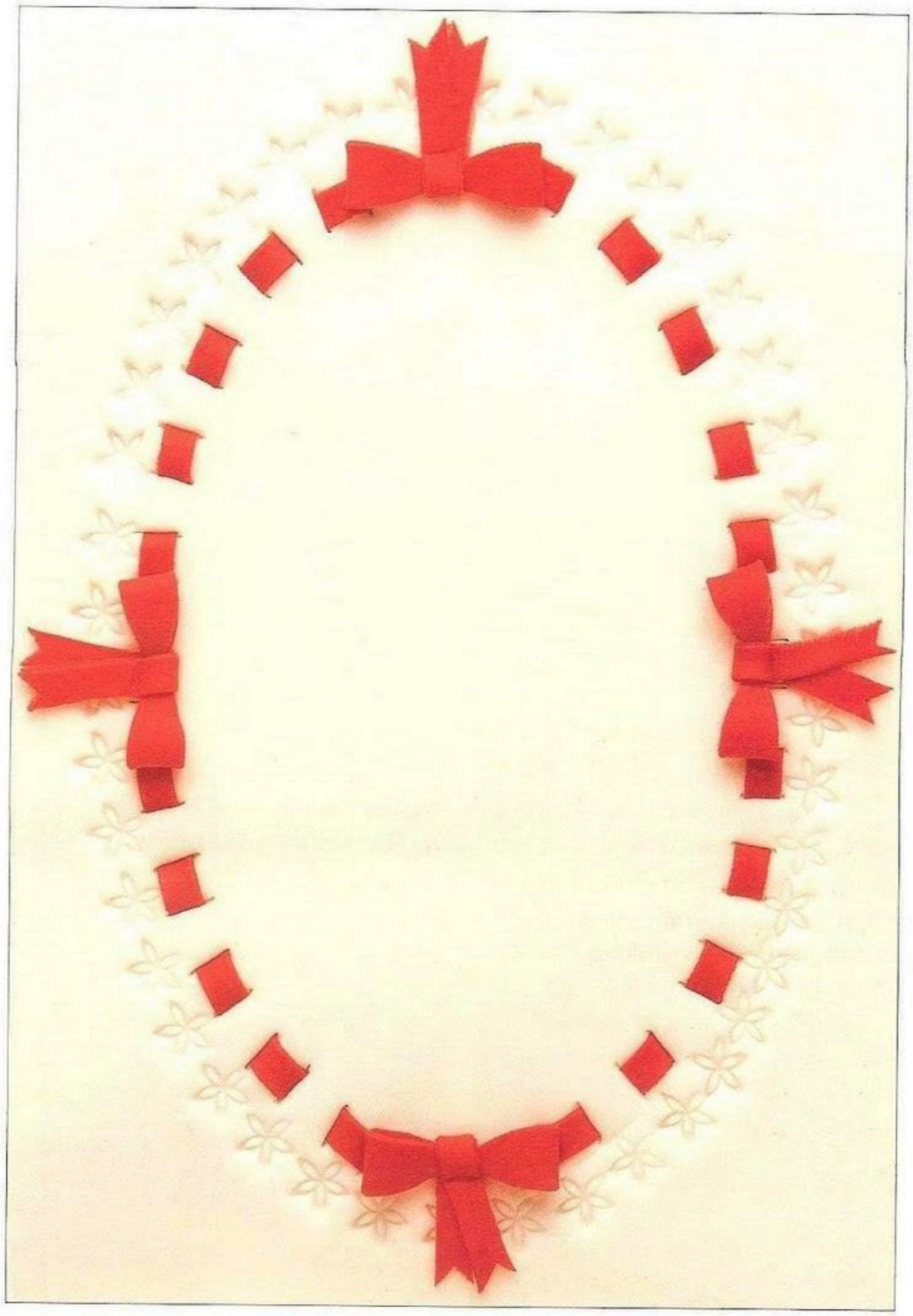


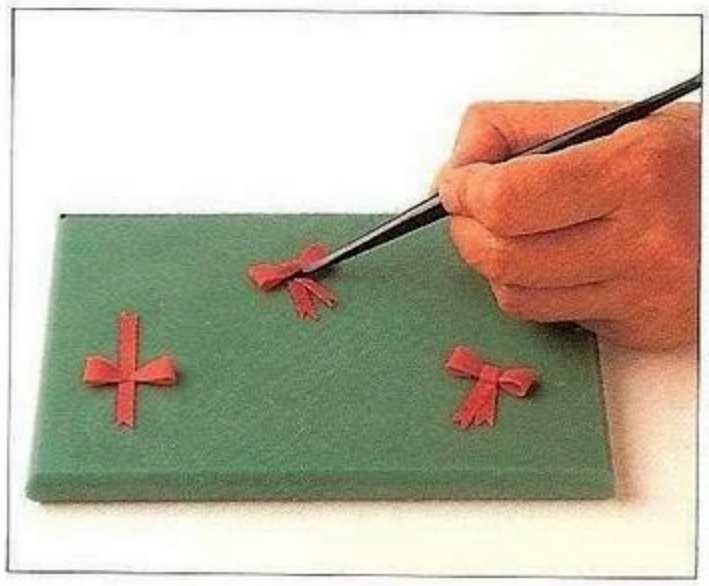
SUGAR BOWS

These provide a neat finish to ribbon insertion and other techniques. Sugar bows can be cut by hand from strips created as for sugar ribbon insertion (opposite). Alternatively, you can use commercial bow cutters.



1 Colour some flower paste and roll it out thinly on a non-stick board. Cut out the shapes required with bow cutters, and neaten the cut edges with a scalpel.



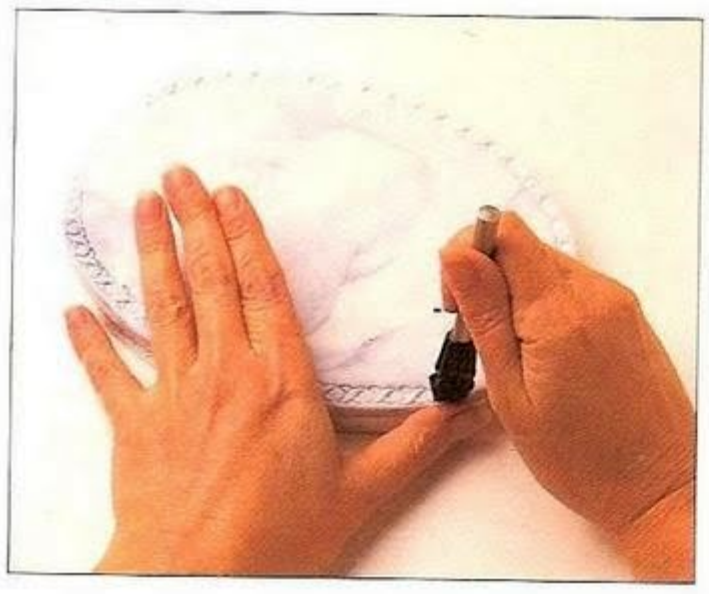


2 Fold the paste to create the two loops of the bow, and position over the straight strip. Fold the strip over the join of the loops and tuck in position with a dresden tool.

3 Sugar bows look most attractive used in combination with sugar ribbon insertion and an embossed edge (page 34).

EMBOSSING

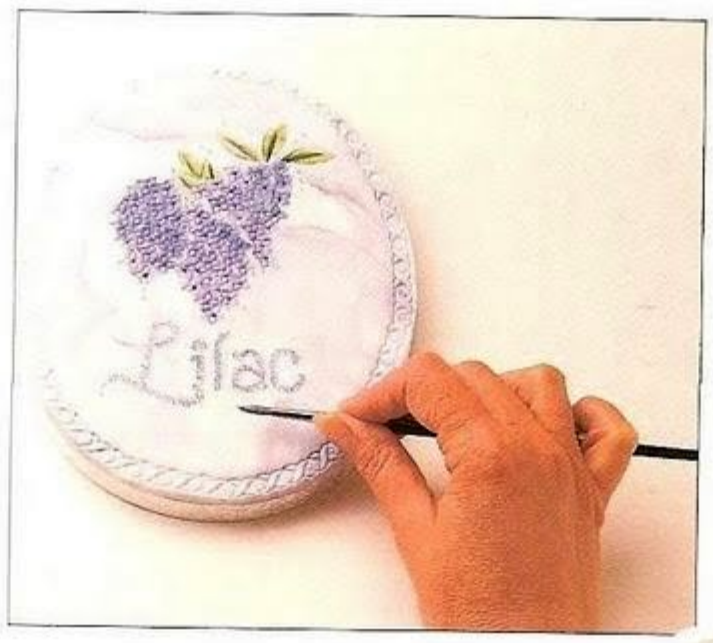
Originating from leatherwork, embossing is very suitable for use on sugarpaste or marzipan. Many different embossers are available commercially and you can make your own embossing tools with carved buttons, jewellery, etc. (very well cleaned).



1 Coat the surface area with sugarpaste and immediately start to emboss while the paste is still soft. When working along an edge, use the ball of your thumb to guide the embosser into the correct position.

2 Textured patterns can be created by repeating the embossing technique in small areas. Here a small flower embosser has been used to create a lilac design.

3 Enhance the embossed patterns with colour, if required, using paste, liquid or powder food colourings mixed with clear alcohol and painted on with a fine brush.



4 To complete the embossed design, add lettering in royal icing (page 82).

5 This coated drum shows a crimped edge with embossed patterns. All the patterned areas have been painted with food colours.

EXPERT ADVICE

Liquid food colours are water based, so can be diluted with water, if necessary. Paste or powder colours work better if diluted with alcohol.

6 This board has been coated in white sugarpaste, then a lilac padded outer edge has been applied and then crimped with a curved crimper. The pattern has been completed with an embosser tool and the finer detail added with piped royal icing.

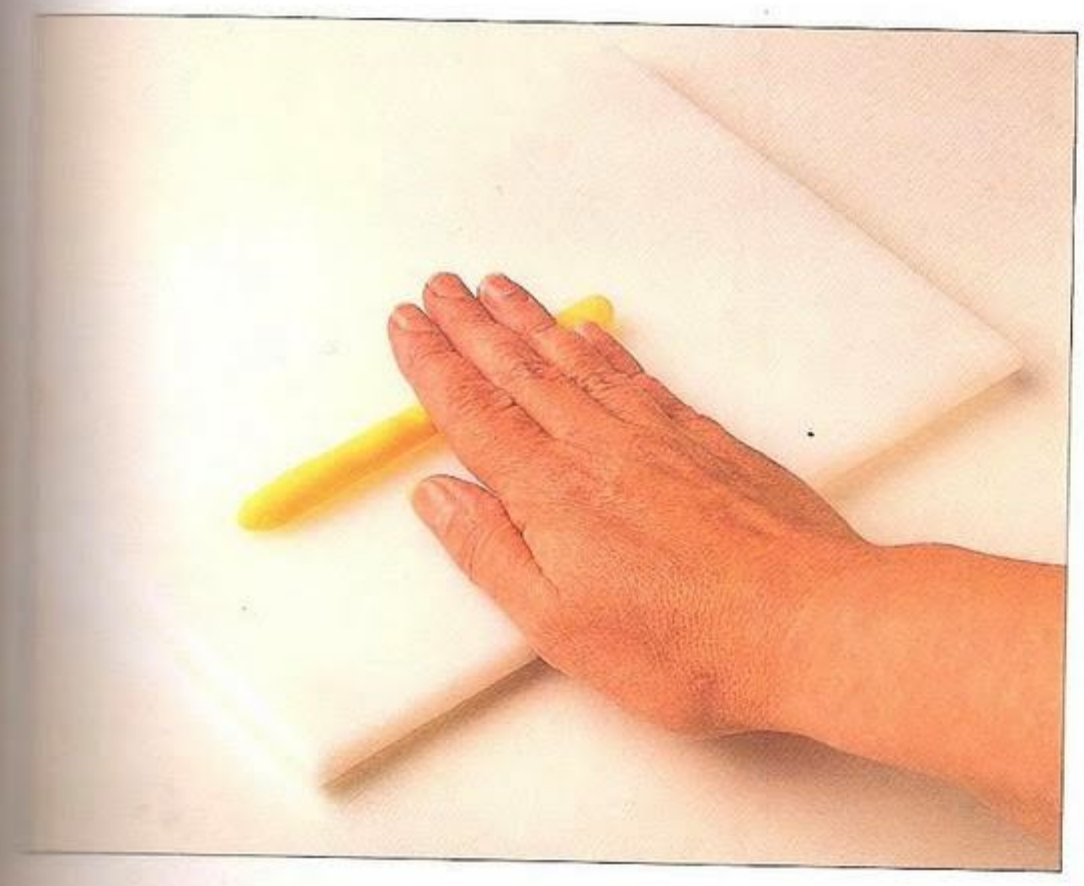
ROPES AND PLAITS

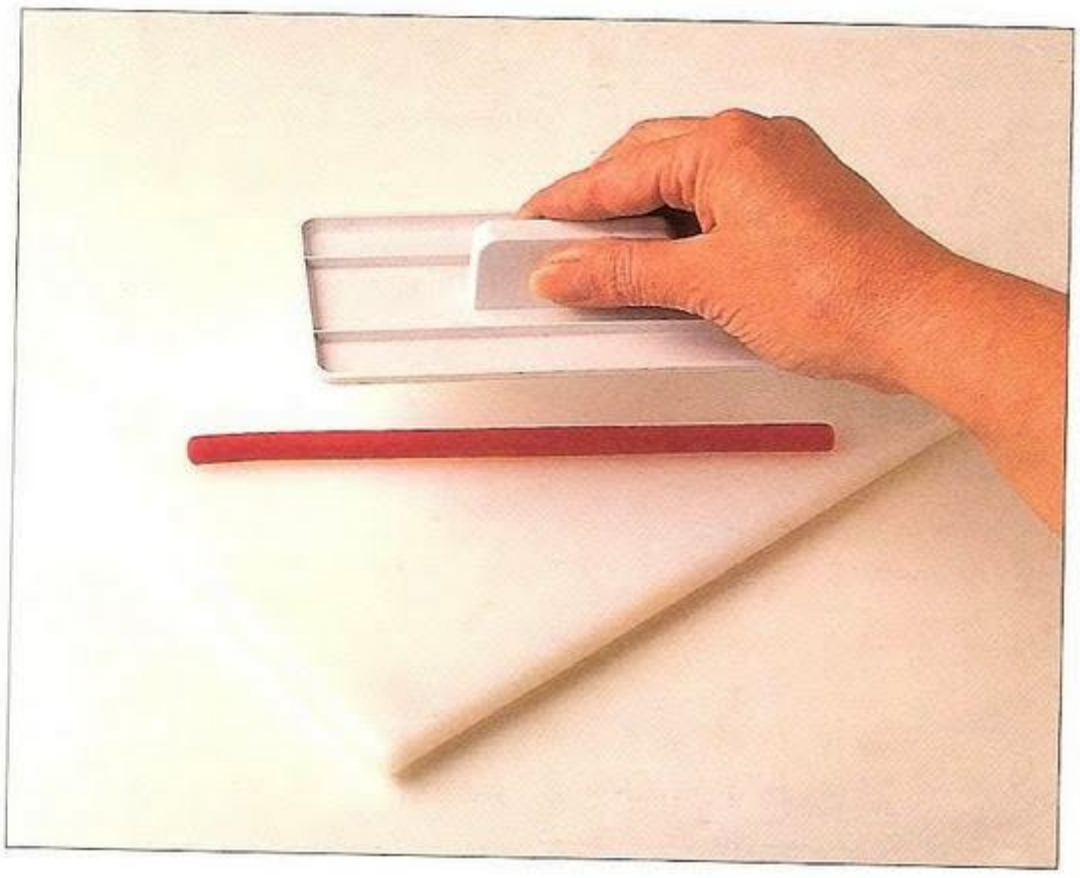
A simple and colourful finish for many cakes can be achieved by using sugar ropes and plaits, particularly on novelty and children's cakes. The most suitable medium is sugarpaste or marzipan, but fine ropes and plaits can also be made with flower paste.

1 Colour some paste and roll with your hand on a board to create a long, smooth sausage shape.

2 An icing polisher can be used to achieve a very even roll.

3 Using contrasting colours, varying thicknesses of paste, and different braiding patterns, a variety of rope and plait styles can be created. See the Clown Cake on page 27, and the rag doll's hair on page 44.

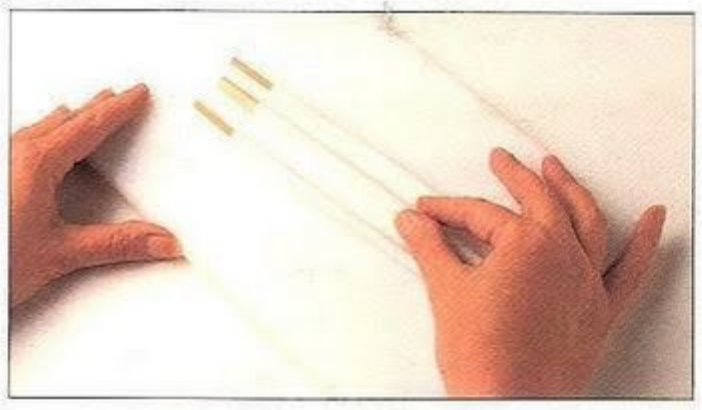




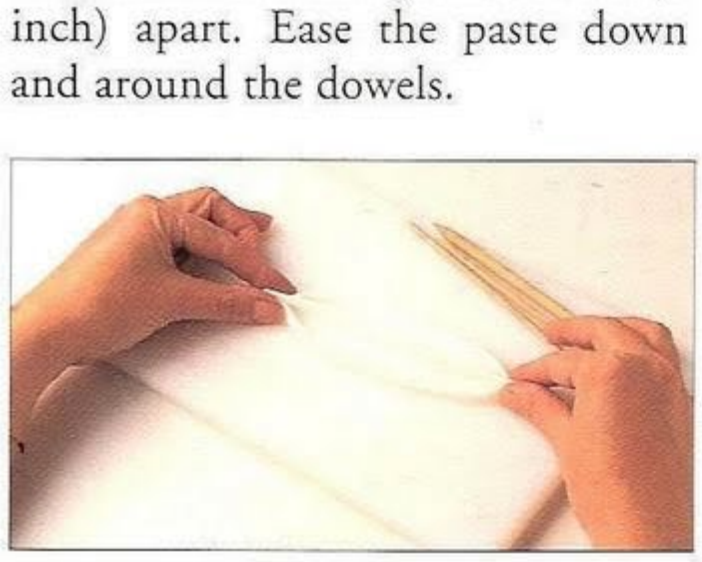
DRAPES AND BOWS

This technique gives a soft effect to cakes; the strengthened sugarpaste easily folds into the required swags.

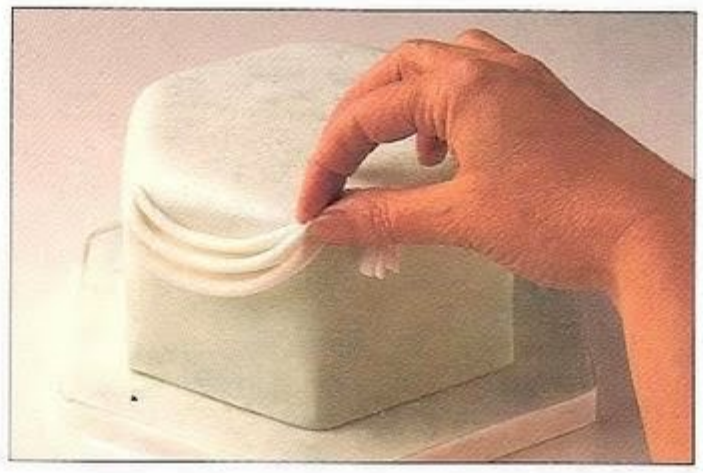
1 Mix 1 teaspoon gum tragacanth into 225g (8oz) sugarpaste. Measure the part of the cake across which the drape will be positioned and add 2.5cm (1 inch) to this measurement. Measure the width required, approximately 5cm (2 inches), and cut a template this size. Roll out the paste quite thinly and cut out the shape, using the template and a sharp knife or scalpel.



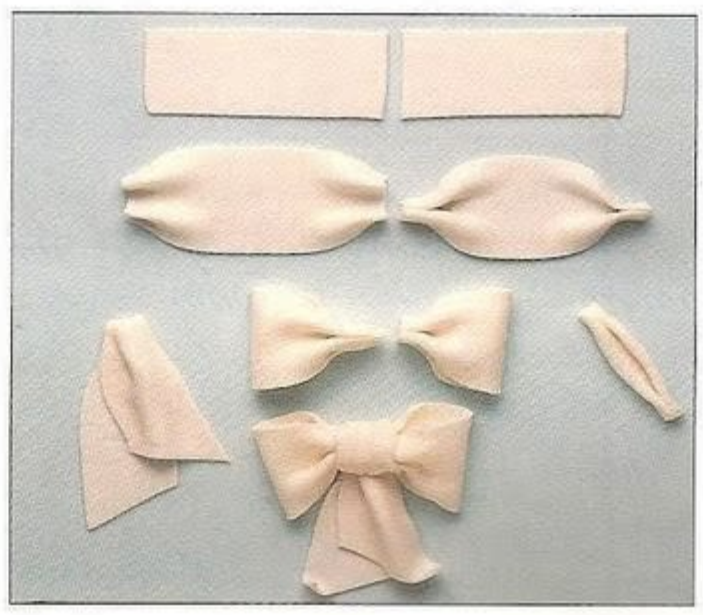
2 Lift the paste on to three dowel rods which are laid parallel 1cm (½ inch) apart. Ease the paste down and around the dowels.



3 Remove the rods, leaving the paste in its curved shape. Pinch the ends of the paste together.



4 Moisten the surface of the cake where the drape will sit with a little cool boiled water. Lift the drape by the pinched ends only and gently shake it to encourage a curve. Place the drape in position on the cake and ensure it is firmly fixed. Trim away any excess paste. Cover the ends of the drapes with sugarpaste bows (see below).



5 To make a bow, roll out some more strengthened paste, and cut out two rectangles that are slightly smaller than those cut for the drapes. Use a dowel rod to shape the ends. Pinch the ends, then fold the paste in half lengthways and glue with cool boiled water. Cut two tails from rectangles of paste and attach in position on the cake. Add the bow loops. Cut a smaller rectangle of paste and lightly pleat for the bow knot. Moisten the position on the bow loops and wrap the knot piece around. Cut away any excess paste and rub the join smooth with a small modelling tool.

Bows and Drapes Cake

MATERIALS

20cm (8 inch) round cake
Apricot glaze (page 13)
900g (2lb) marzipan (almond paste)
25cm (10 inch) round cake drum
800g (1¾lb) sea green sugarpaste (coloured with ice blue and mint green paste food colourings)
Silver snowflake lustre powder
Clear alcohol (gin or vodka)
400g (14oz) white sugarpaste
1 teaspoon gum tragacanth
2 royal icing doves, optional

EQUIPMENT

Icing polishers
Piece of sponge
Dowel rods
Heart cutters

1 Brush the cake with apricot glaze and coat in marzipan using the all-in-one method (page 13).

2 Place the cake on the cake drum. Moisten the cake with cool boiled water and coat the cake and drum in sea green sugarpaste (page 22). Leave to dry.

3 Mix some sea green colouring (made by mixing ice blue and mint green) with silver snowflake dust and alcohol, and sponge the surface of all the sugarpaste (page 25). Leave to dry.

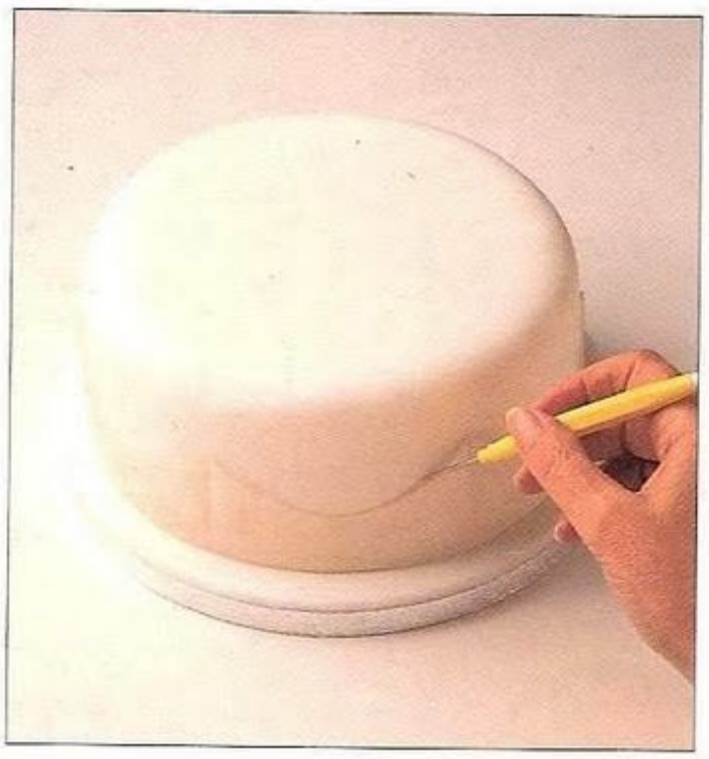
4 Make the drapes and bows in strengthened sugarpaste as shown left, and attach to the cake. Cut two hearts from white sugarpaste and glue in position in the centre of the cake. Attach smaller hearts around the base. Add piped dots and two royal icing doves, if wished.

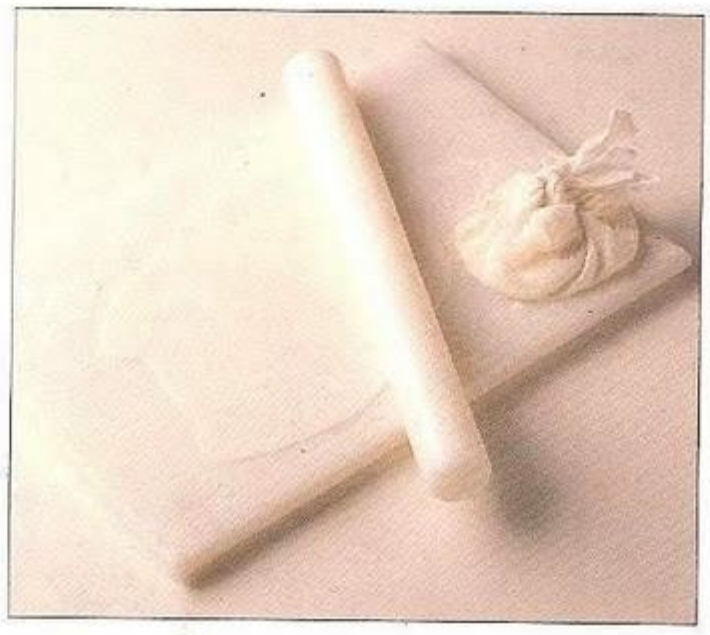
Frilling

Frilling has become a very popular decorative technique that works well with sugarpaste. A variety of frill cutters is available, round and straight, with a choice of edges. We have started with the original, the Garrett frill cutter (named after Elaine Garrett who first developed the technique).

If your sugarpaste is quite soft you might need to strengthen it, either by adding 1 teaspoon gum tragacanth to every 450g (1lb) sugarpaste, or by making up a different paste that is 75 per cent sugarpaste and 25 per cent flower paste (page 84).

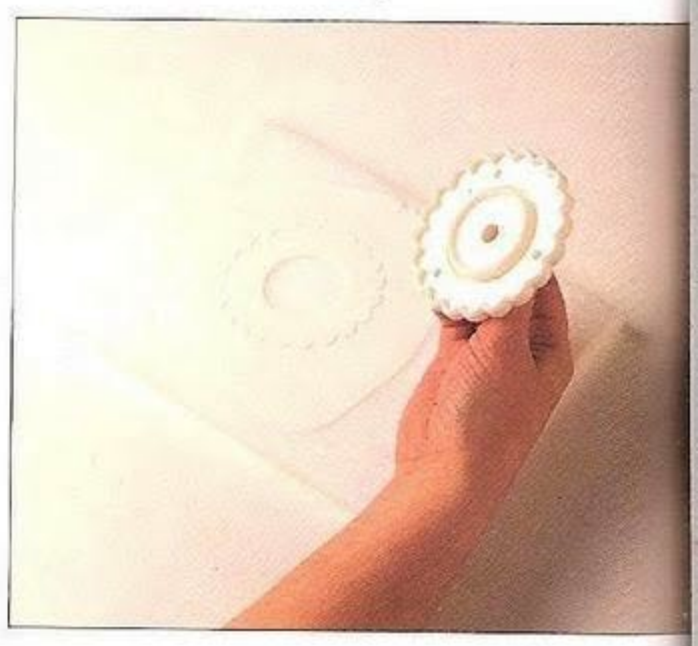
1 Using a paper template and a scriber, mark a line on the side of the cake along which the frills will be positioned.



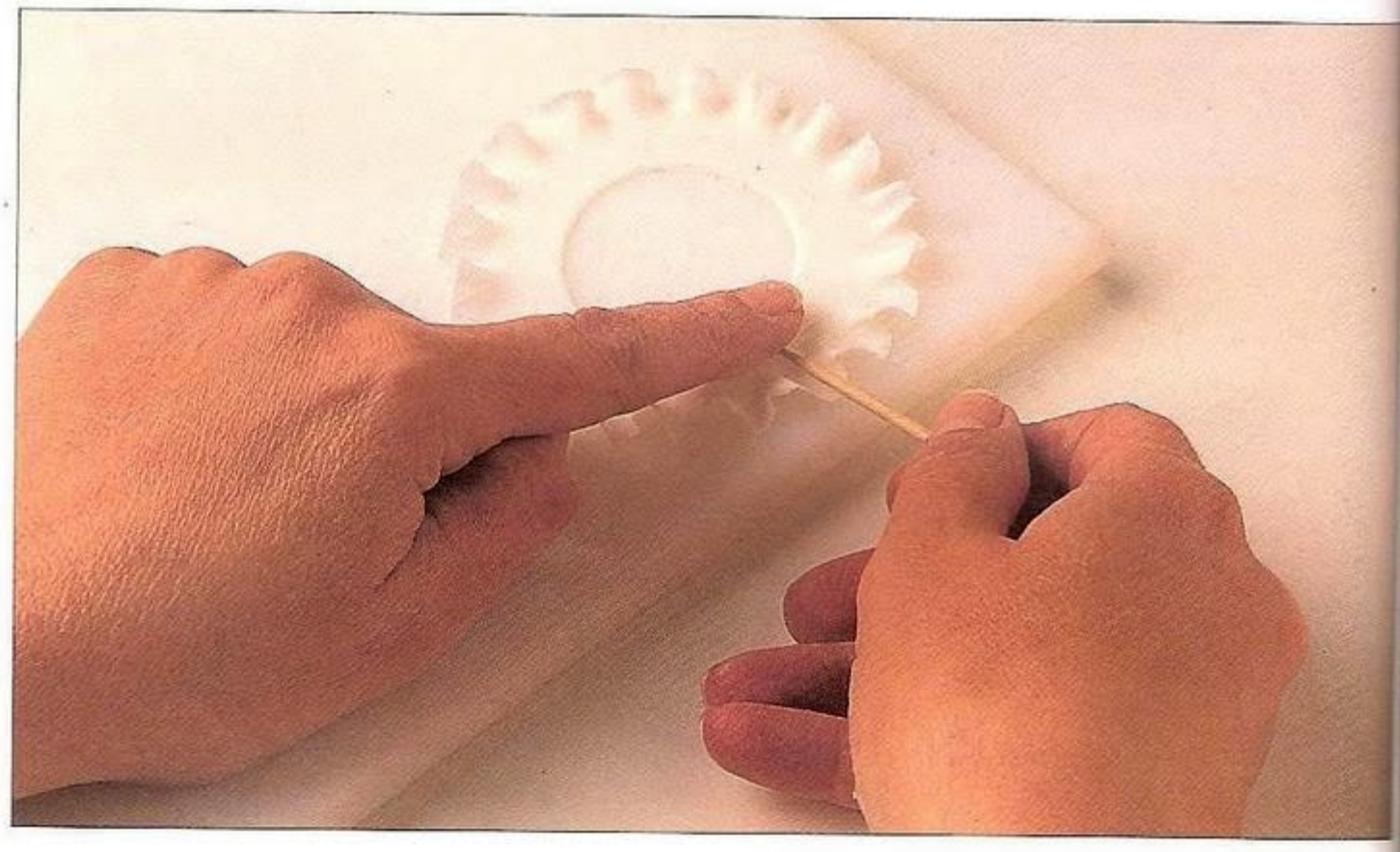


2 Roll out the paste thinly on a non-stick board dusted with a small amount of cornflour.

3 Cut out a frill with a Garrett frill cutter. Carefully remove the cut-out centre of the frill.

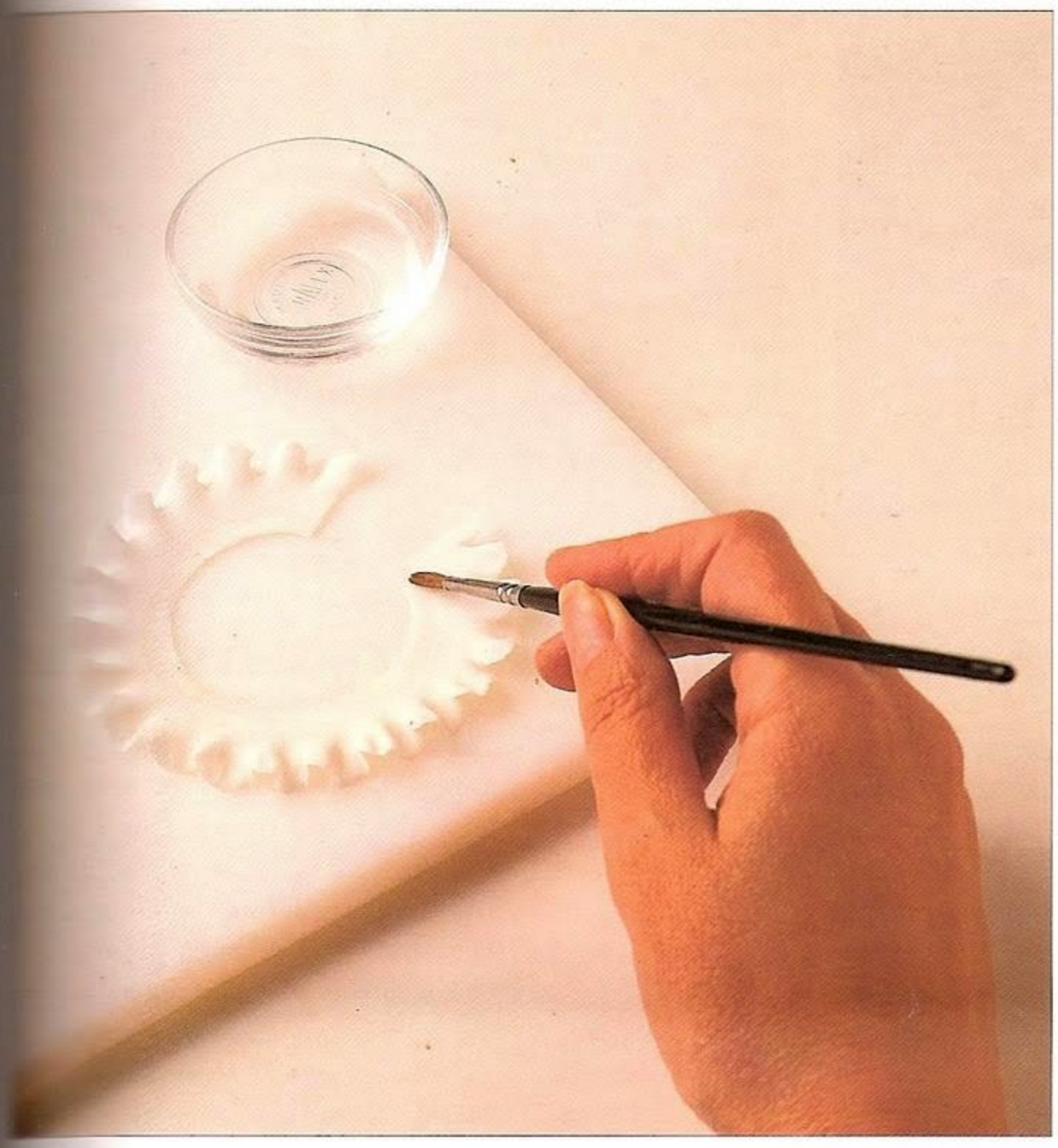


4 Bring the frill to the edge of the board, ensuring that it slides easily. Frill the edges with a cocktail stick (toothpick), using the side of the stick and not the point to avoid making marks. Holding the stick with one hand and using the pres-



EXPERT ADVICE

When dusting with cornflour, use a muslin bag to ensure an even and thin distribution of the cornflour.

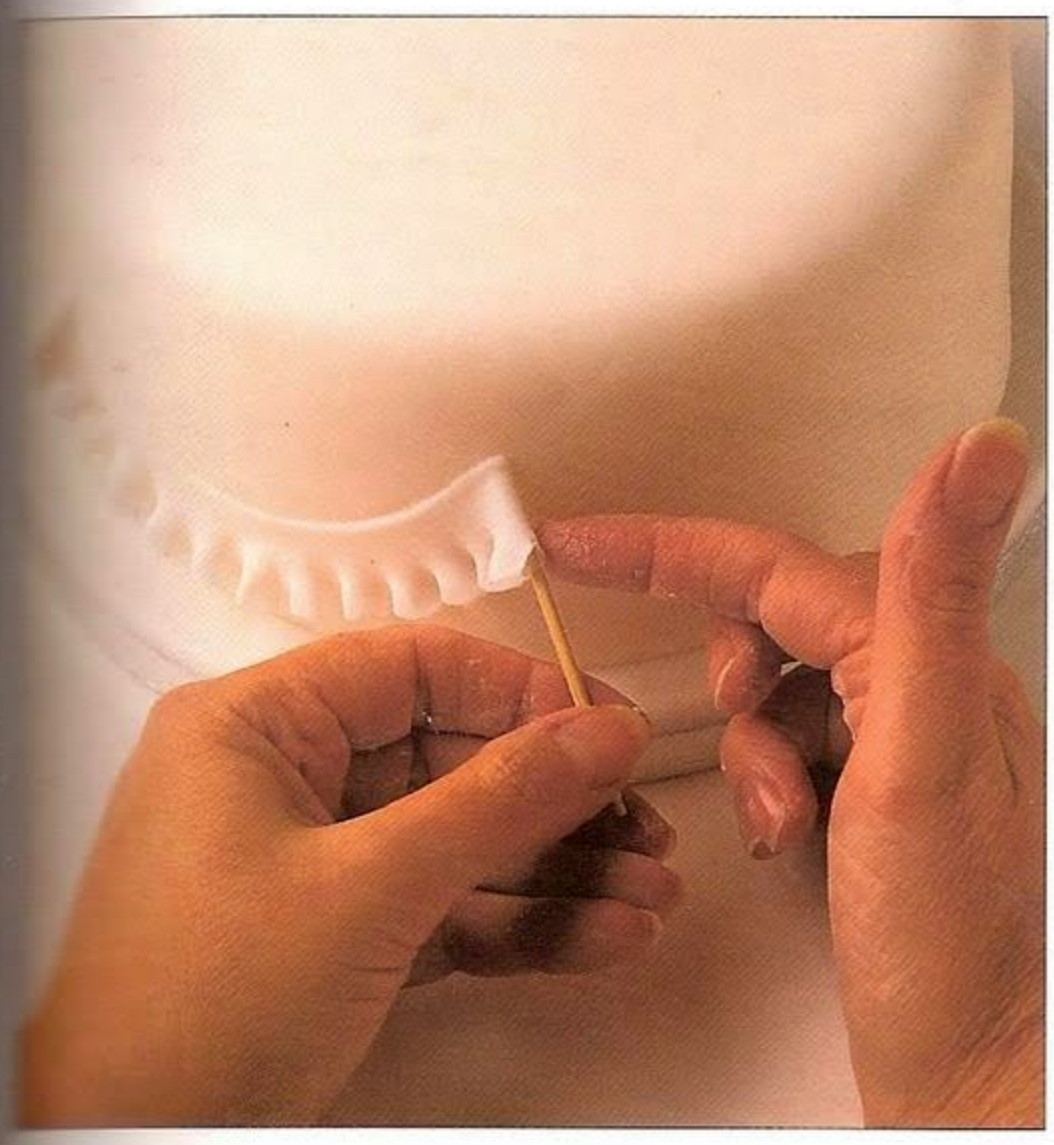


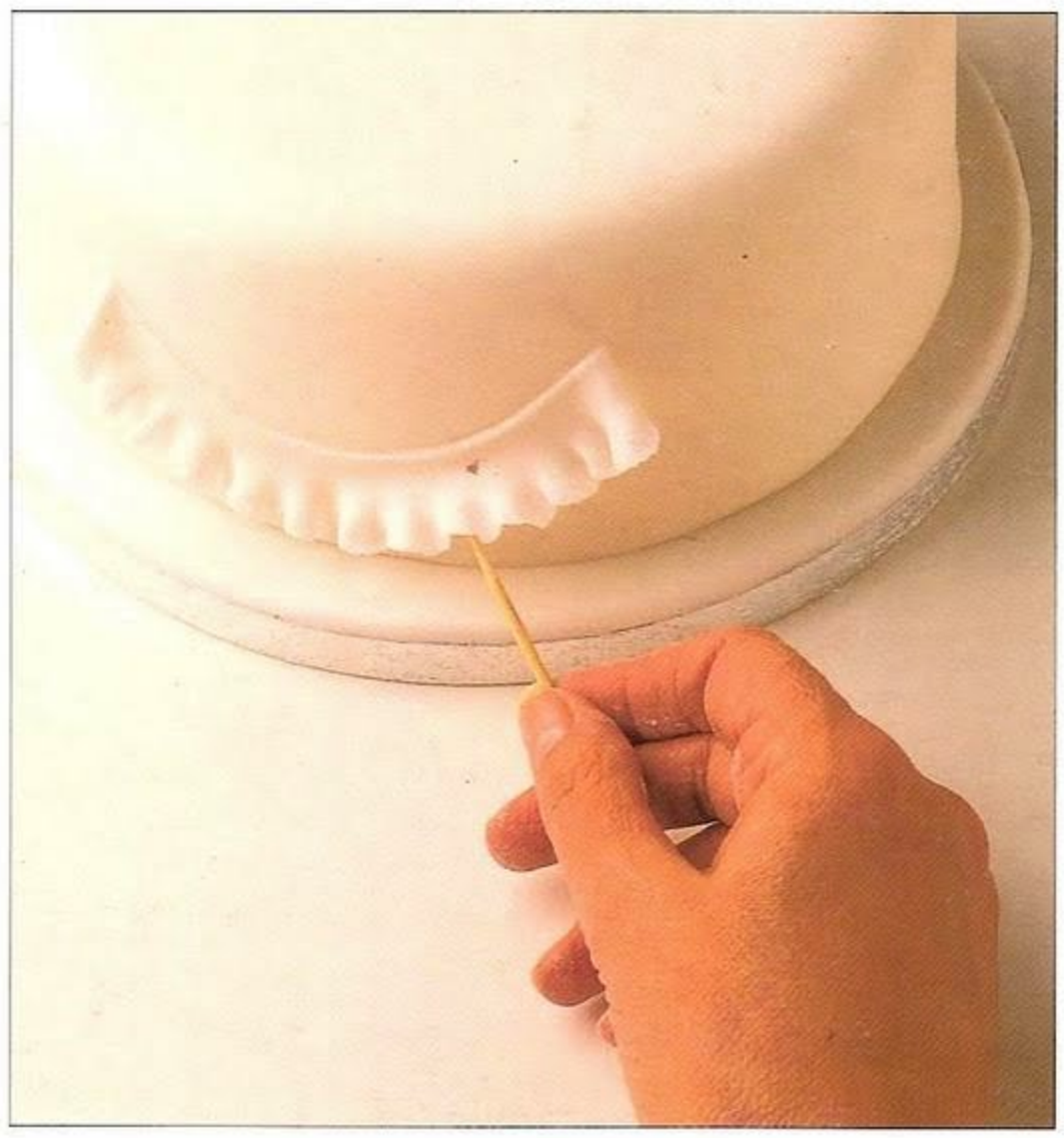
sure of the forefinger of the other hand, continue to roll and frill all the way around, turning the frill as you go. Work quickly so that the edge of the frill does not dry out and start to break.

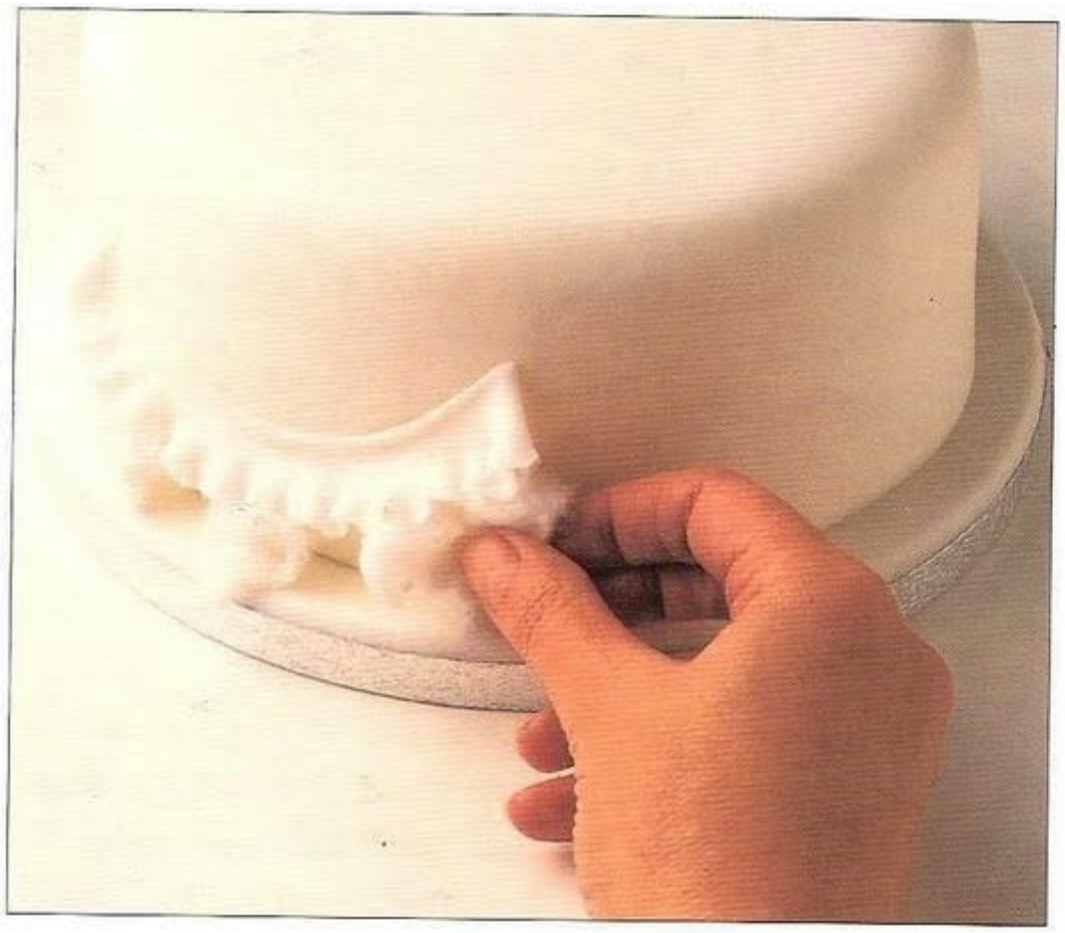
5 Cut through the frill to make one long strip, and turn it over. Paint some cool boiled water along the unfrilled, flat edge.

6 Lift the frill with both hands and line up the unfrilled edge along the marked line on the cake. Cut the frill to the correct size with a scalpel, small sharp knife or fine scissors. Ease gently into position. Use a cocktail stick to turn the ends of the frill under, allowing the frill to roll around the stick, until the stick is at right angles to the cake.

7 Again with the help of the cocktail stick or your fingers, lift all the pleats in the frill until the overall effect is evenly distributed.

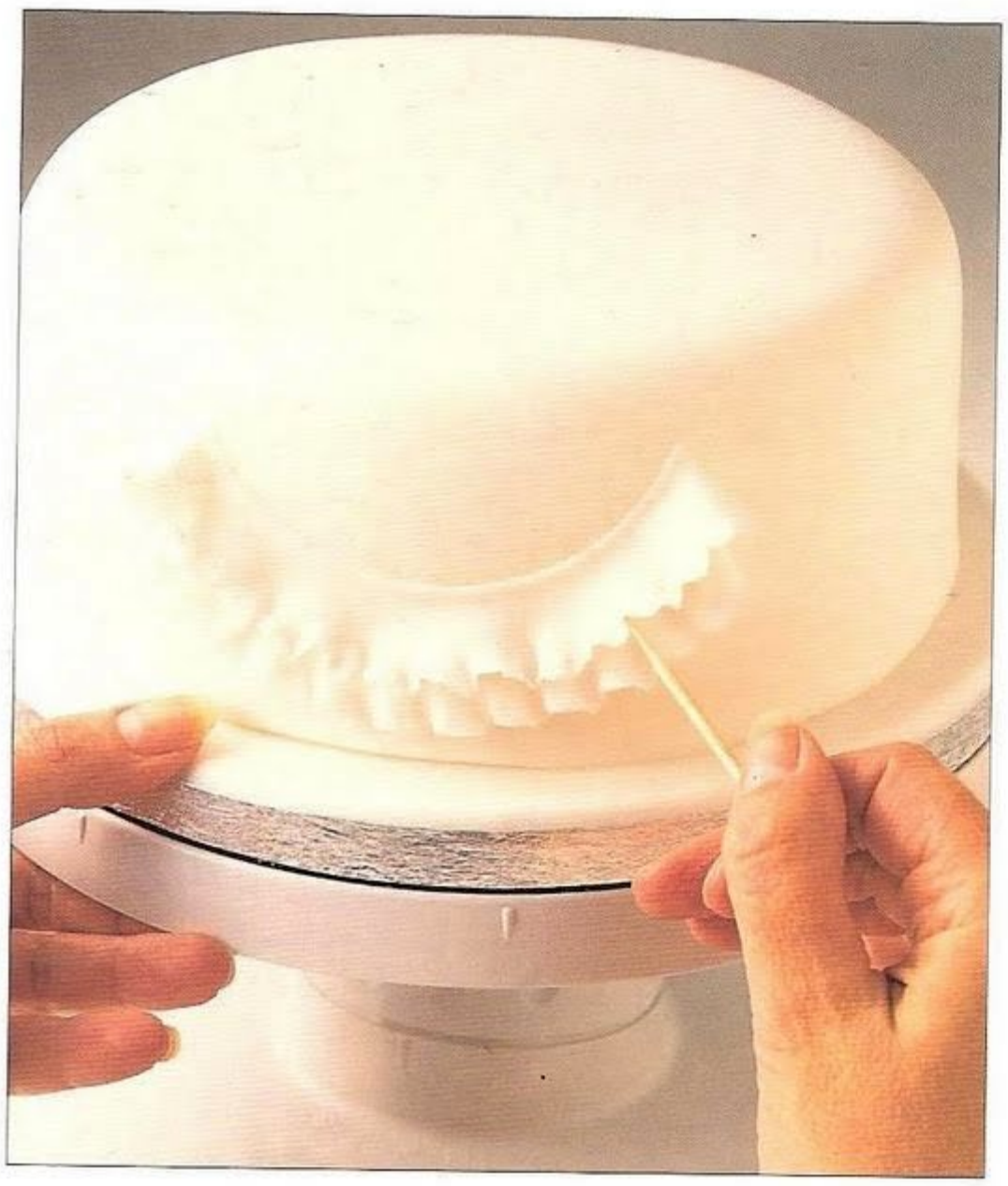






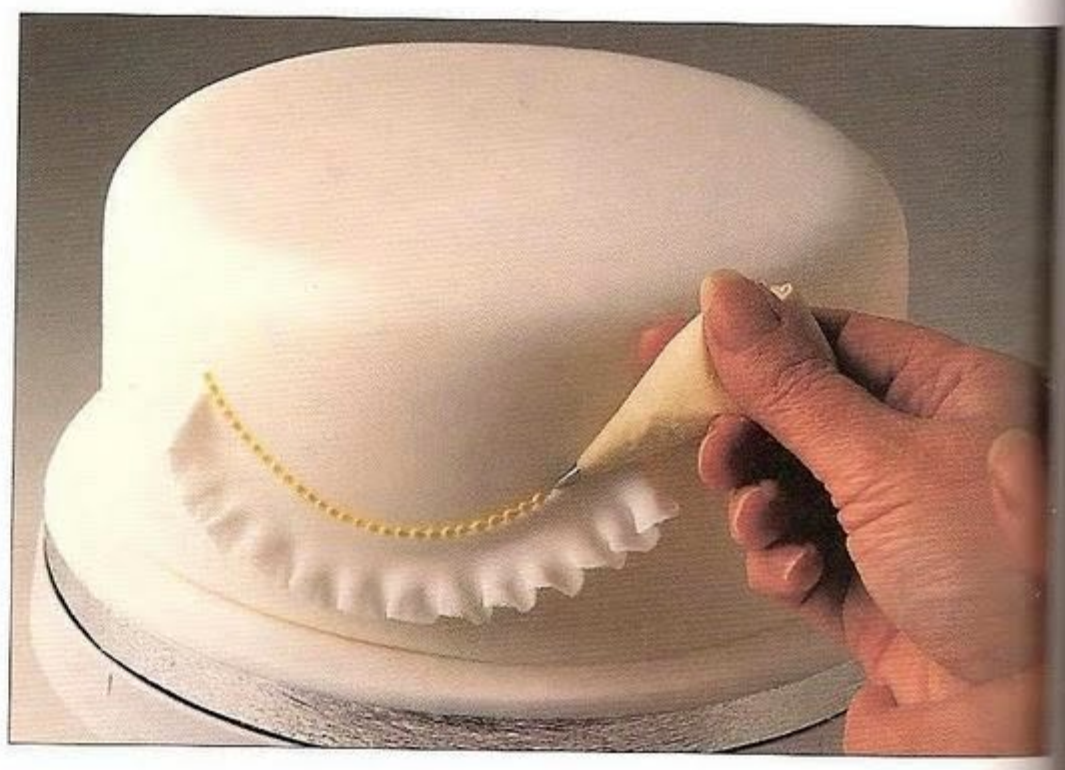
8 Alternatively, support the frill with some cotton wool or tiny pieces of foam, until dry. To complete, neaten the top edge of the frill with a knife or scalpel.

9 For double frills, apply the bottom layer first (which can be a different colour from the cake), lining up the top edge of the frill to just below the marked line on the cake. Leave this layer to firm up before applying the second frill, lining the top of this one up with just above the marked line on the cake. Turn the cut edges under.



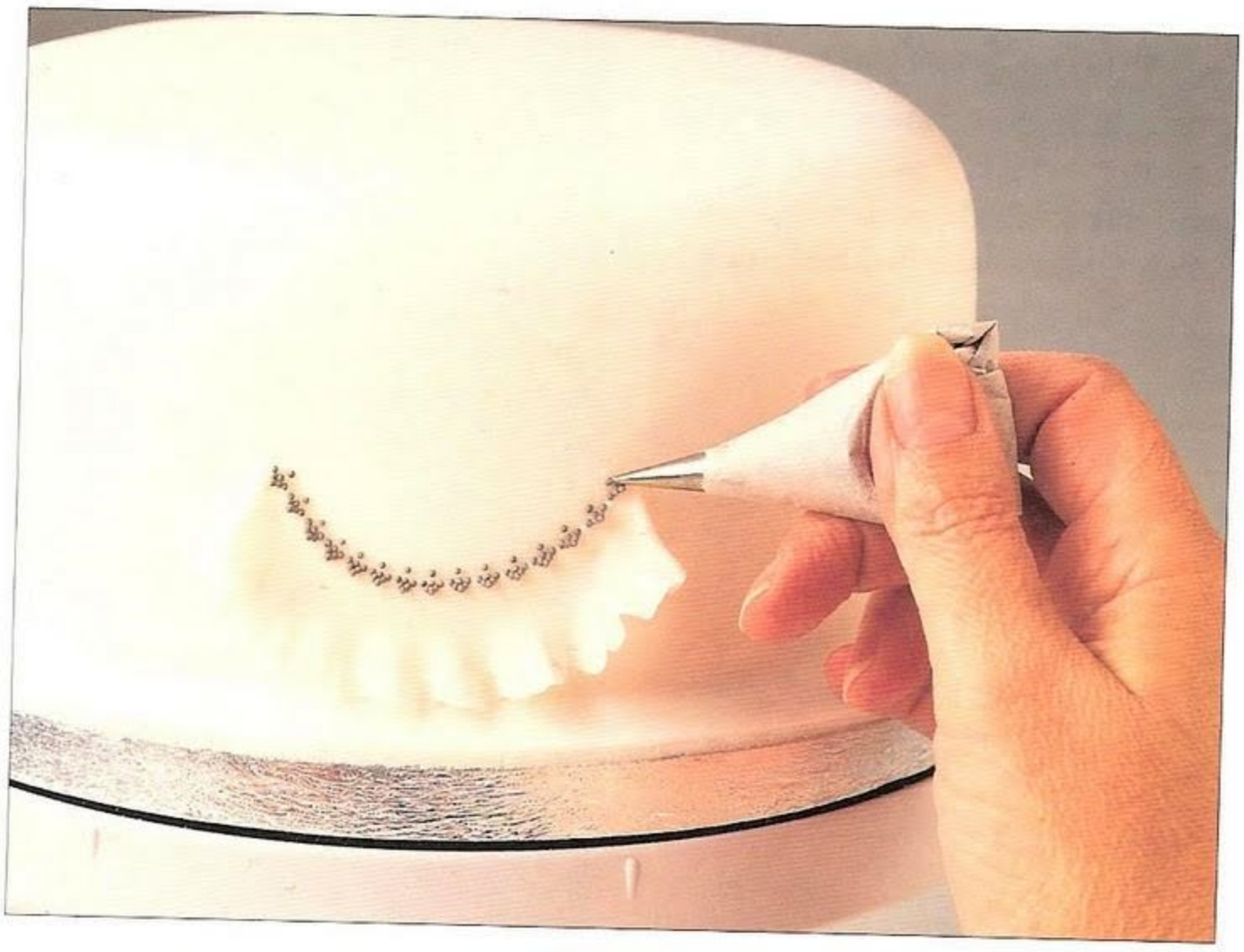
10 For a pierced double frill, apply the first layer of frills and leave them to firm up. Cut frills for the second layer in a contrasting colour. After frilling the edge, but before cutting through the frill, use the smallest plunger cutter to cut out evenly spaced shapes just above the frilled area. Apply to the cake. Decorate the top edge of the frill with small plunger cutter flowers cut from the paste used for the under-frill, attaching with a little cool boiled water.

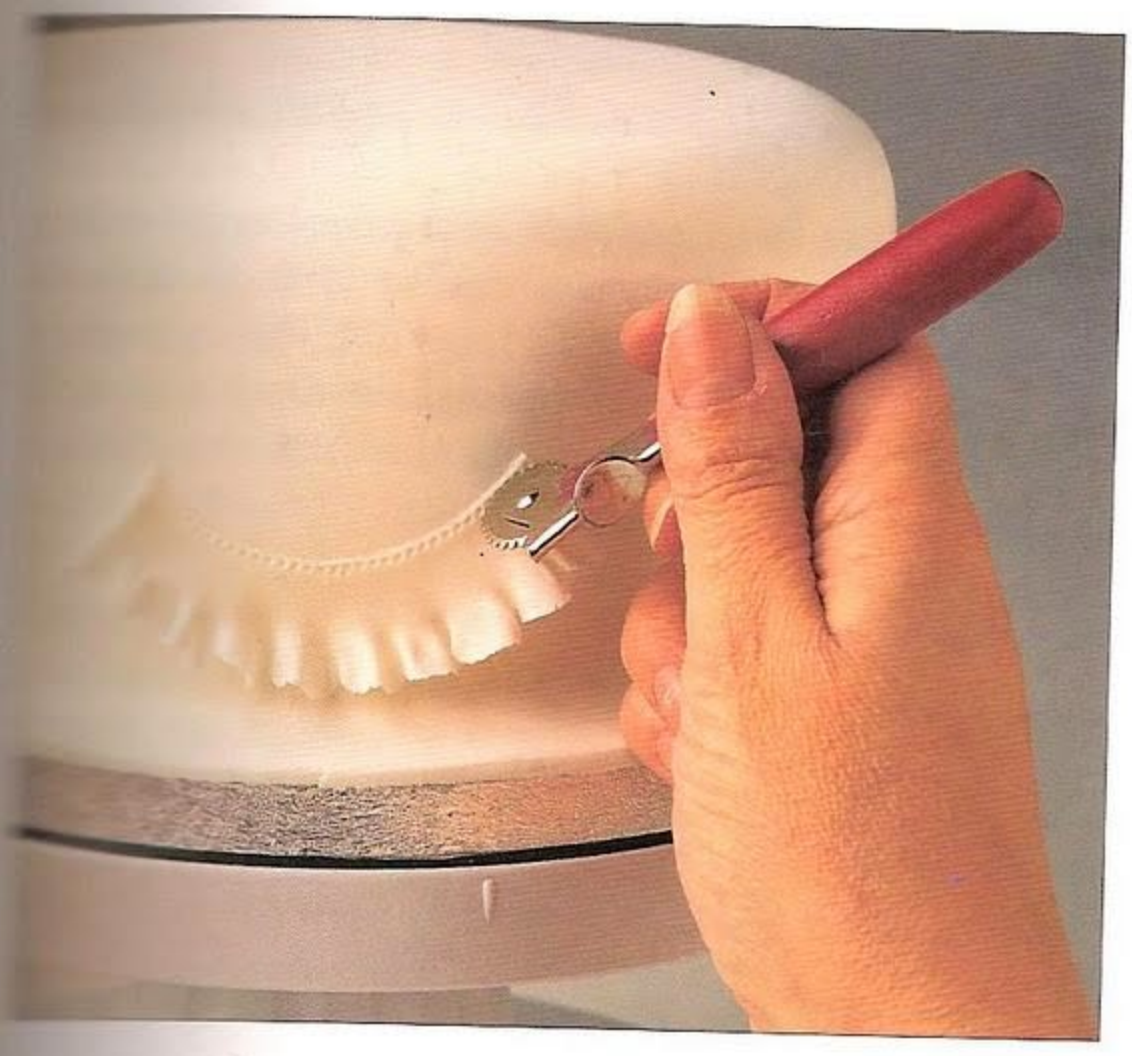
11 The top edge can also be neatened with piped bulbs or shells.

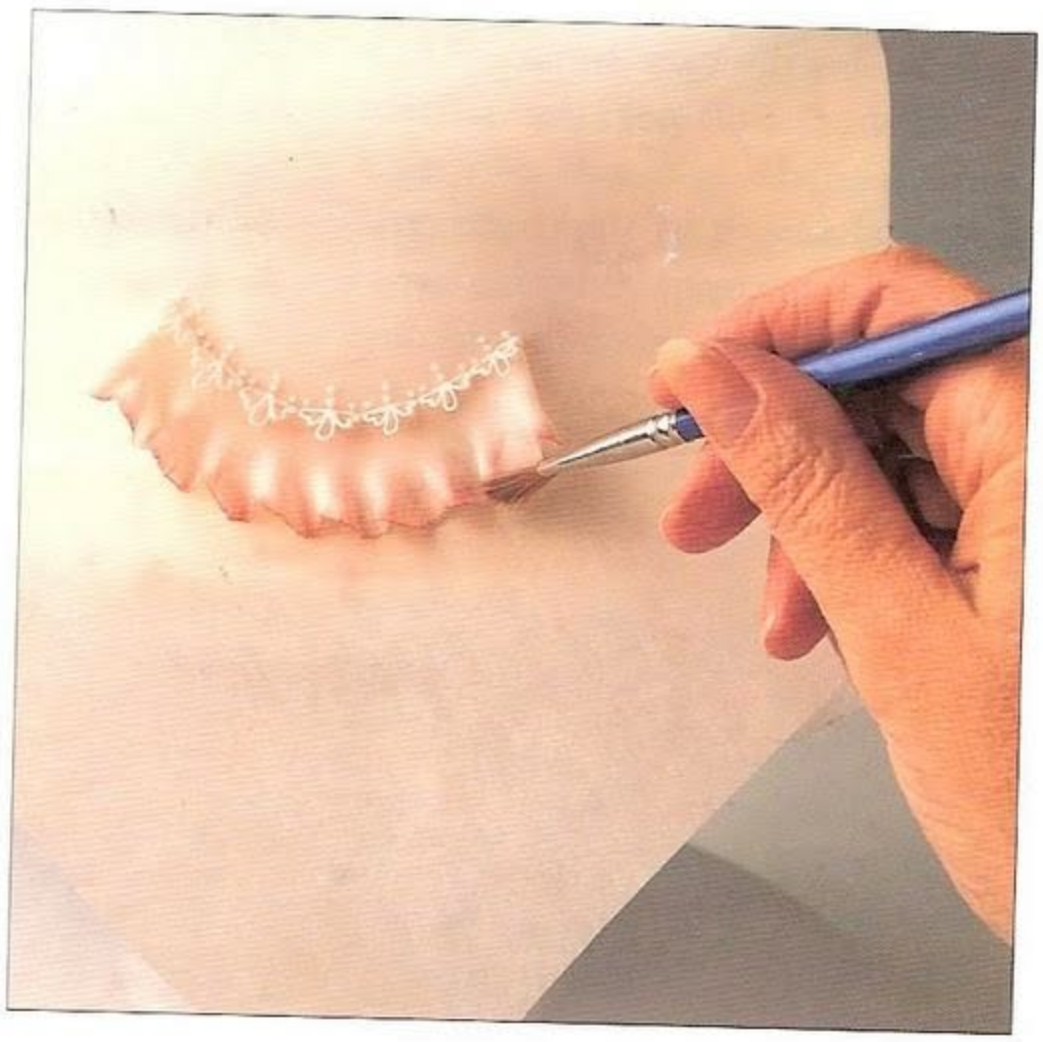


using a no. 1 or no. 2 tube (tip) and royal icing (page 54). Try using different colours.

12 Although more time-consuming, a picot edge can look very attractive. With a no. 1 tube and royal icing, pipe small bulbs in sets of three along the top edge of all the frills on the cake, then add two bulbs nestling in the gaps between the first three bulbs. Finally, add a single bulb on top of the two piped previously. As an alternative, try using different shades of the same colour icing, starting with a dark colour and lightening it by adding more white royal icing for each layer.







13 A tailor's wheel can be rolled along the soft top edge of the frills to give a stitched effect. Try two or even three rows as an alternative.

14 A dusting of colour makes an attractive finish to frills. Slide some greaseproof paper under the frill to protect the bottom of the cake and the coated cake drum. Work powder food colouring (petal dust/blossom tint) into the side of a flat brush and gently stroke the brush upwards across the bottom of the frill. This will produce a strongly coloured edge and a fading out of colour upwards. The top edge of the frill can be finished with lace (page 70).

EXPERT ADVICE

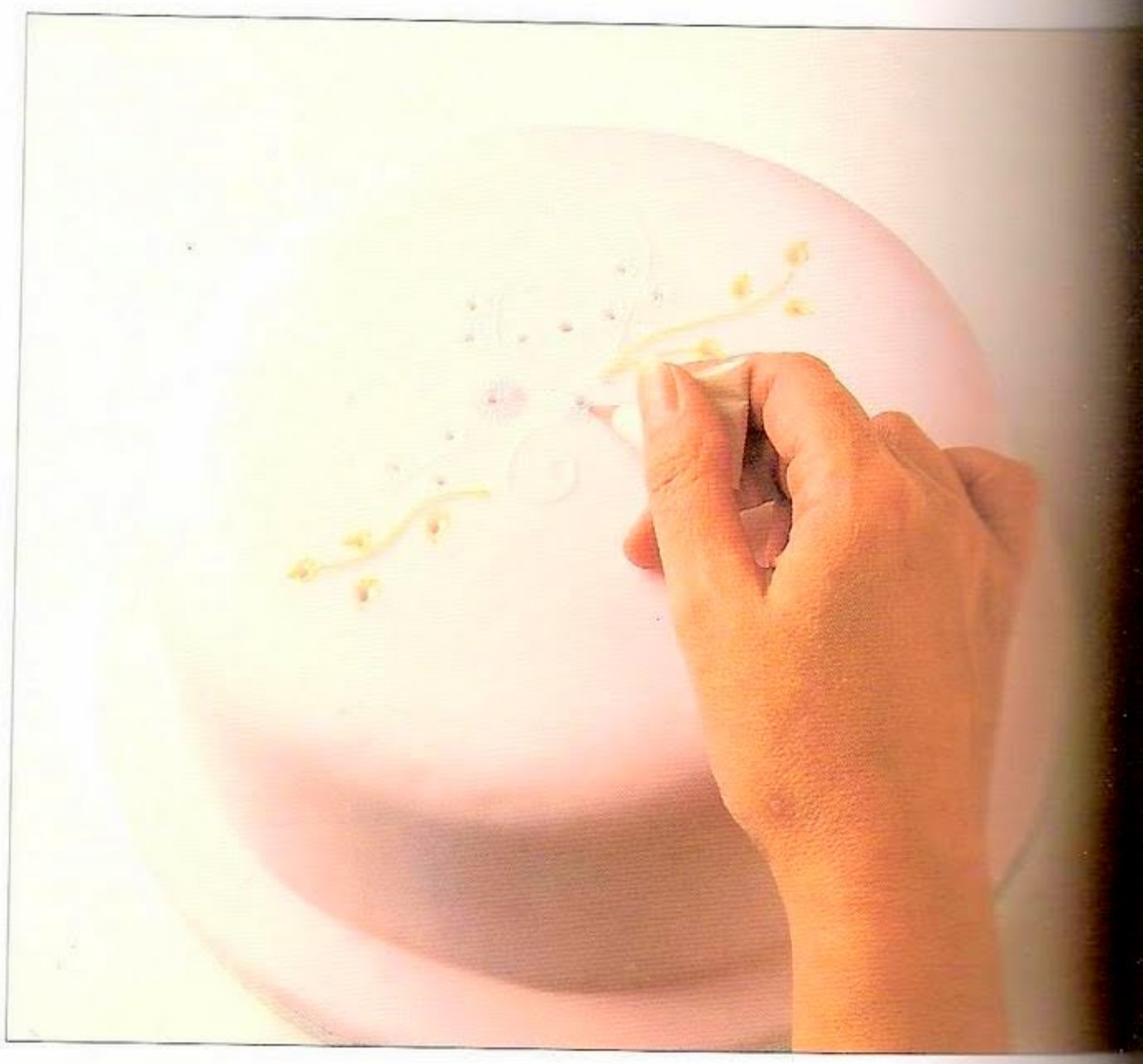
To obtain a softer coloured edge to your frill, mix the petal dust with cornflour to weaken the colour. Lustre powders give a pretty effect.

BRODERIE ANGLAISE

This technique is used on sugarpaste which is still soft. Impressions made in the sugarpaste become part of the finished design.

1 Trace the pattern (page 134) on to greaseproof paper and place in position on the cake surface. Mark the main points of the pattern through to the cake surface with a scriber. Remove the pattern and enlarge the main holes with a modelling tool or clean knitting needle.

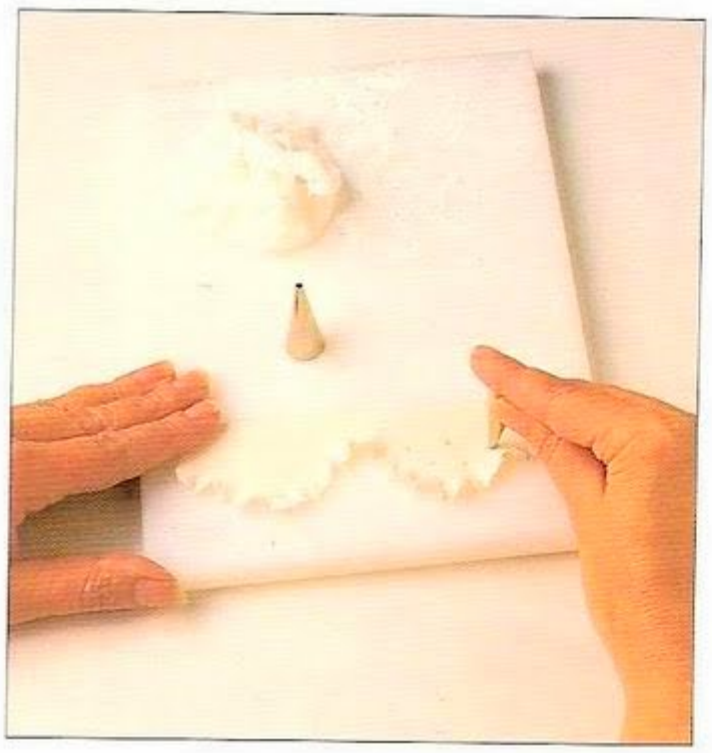
2 Pipe around the holes with royal icing and a no. 0 tube (tip), imitating the machine-stitched designs of fabric broderie anglaise.



3 Different-coloured icing can be used to complete the piping.

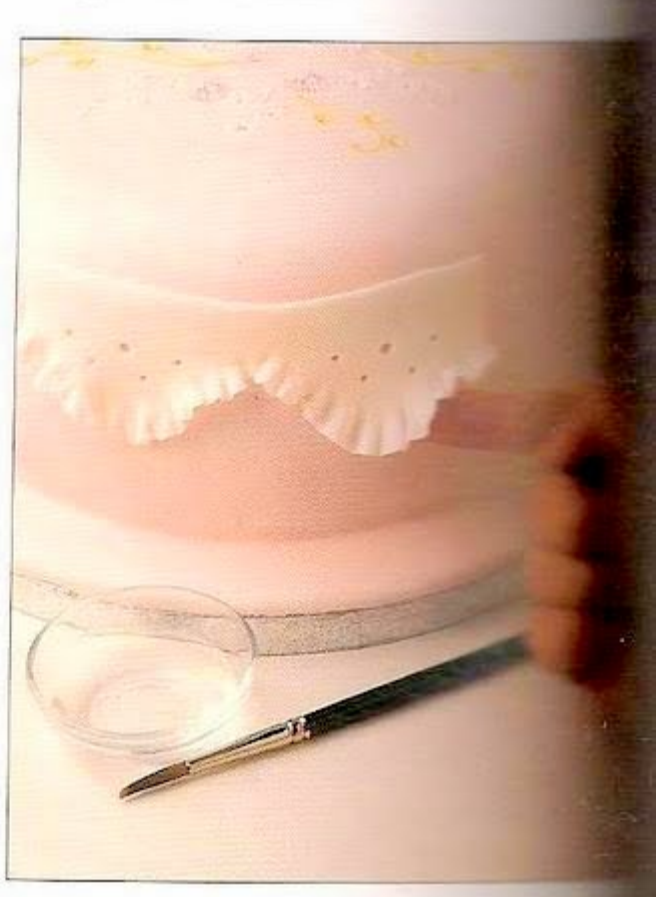
APPLIED BRODERIE ANGLAISE

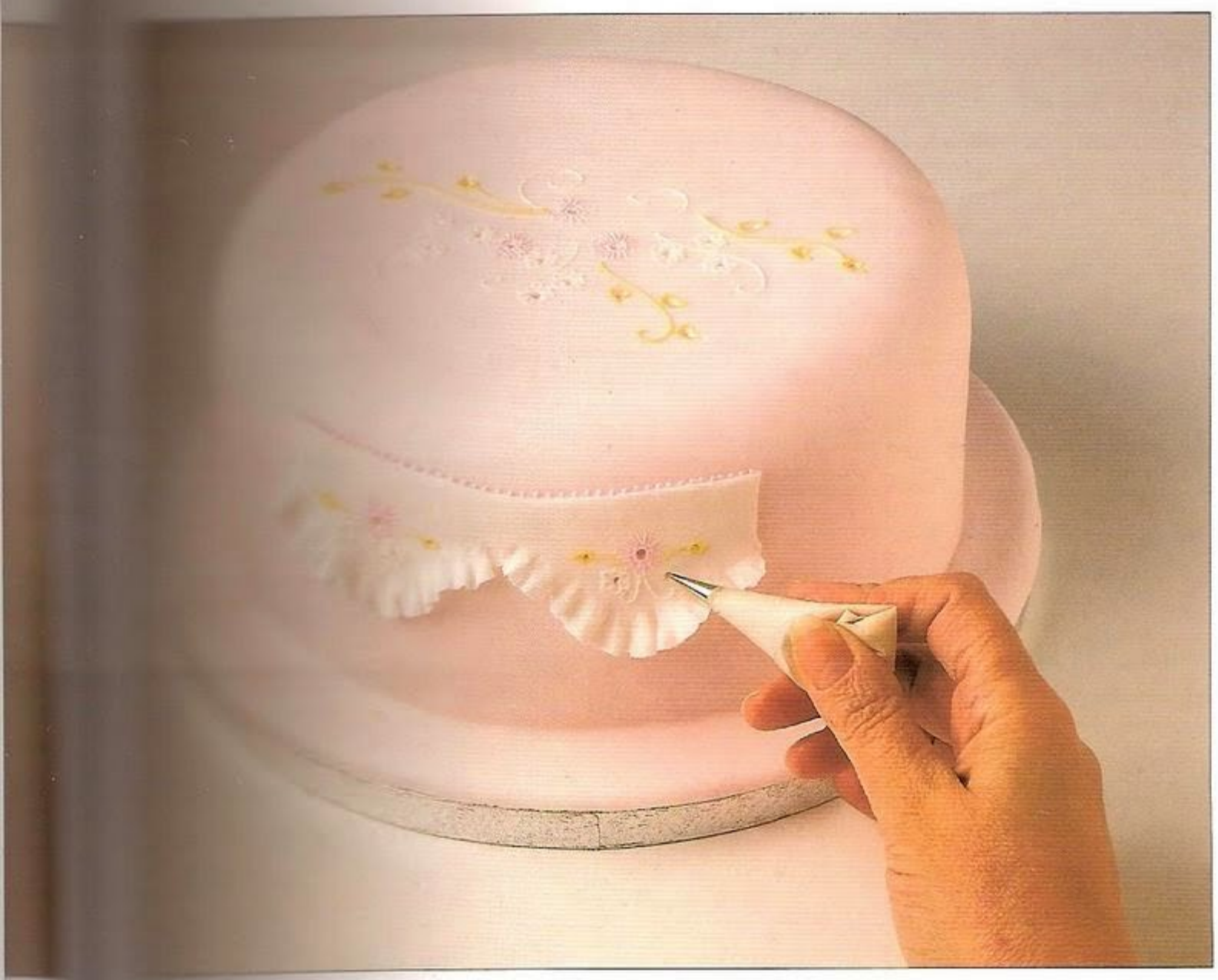
Broderie anglaise can also be made in pieces and applied to the cake.



1 Roll out sugarpaste and cut out the shape required, using either a template and scalpel or a [illegible] anglaise cutter. Frill the [illegible] required (page 38). Cut a [illegible] small holes using no. 3 and [illegible] piping tubes (tips) to obtain [illegible] ent-sized holes.

2 Moisten the top edge [illegible] shape with cool boiled [illegible]





shape to the cake. Ease the shape with fingertips.

3 Complete the design by piping the stitched pattern in royal icing with no. 0 tube.

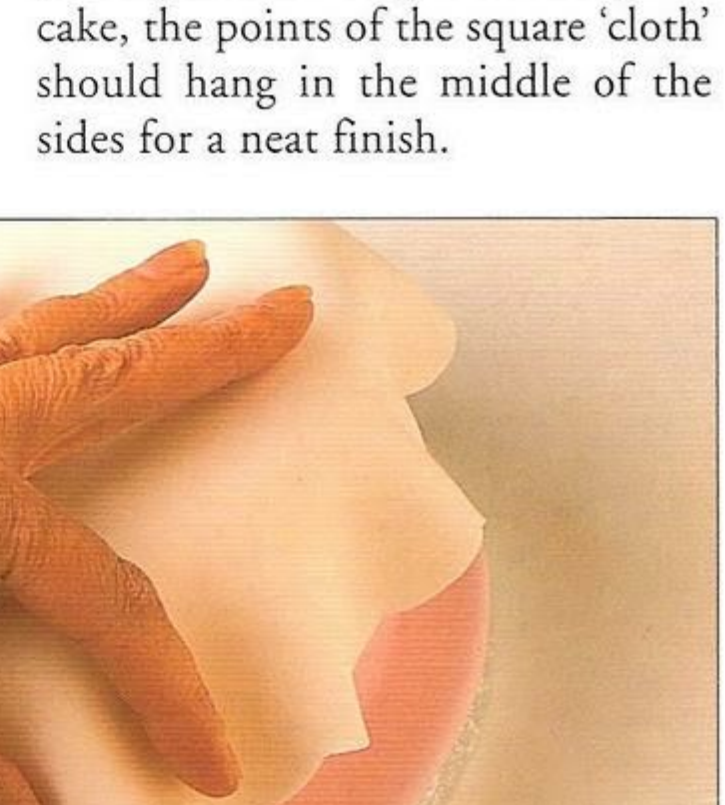
'TABLECLOTH'

A variety of interesting effects can be created by laying a second thin layer of sugarpaste over the cake, and draping it to resemble a cloth draped over. The base coat of sugarpaste can be thinner than usual as an extra layer is applied.

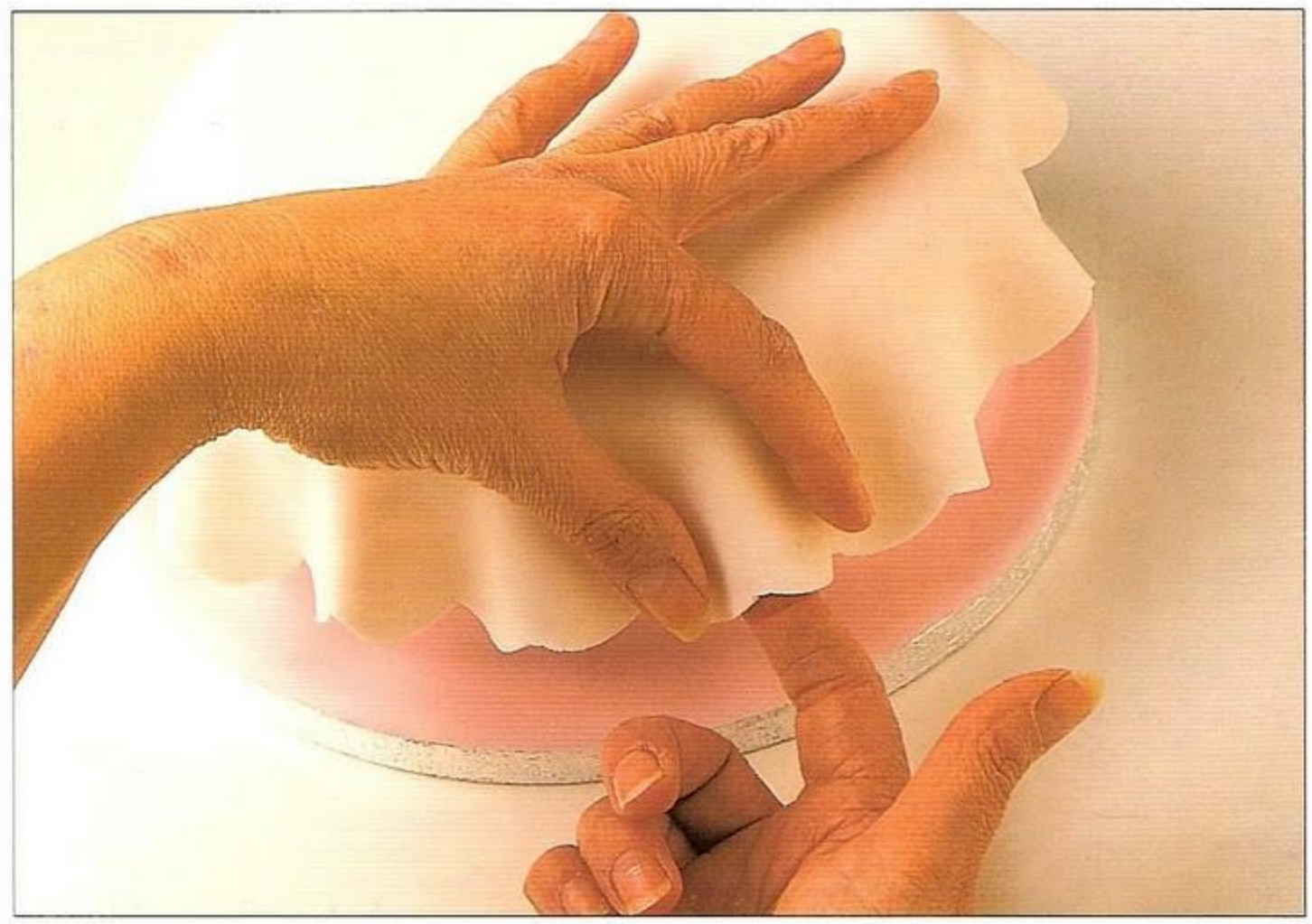
1 Measure the diameter of the coated cake. Add 7.5cm (3 inches) to this measurement and make a paper template. Make up a paste composed of 25 per cent flower paste (page 84) and 75 per cent sugarpaste, kneading well to make a paste with a firmer consistency.

2 Roll out the paste as thinly as possible on a non-stick board. Hold the template lightly on the surface and cut round the template with a sharp knife. Remove the template and polish the surface of the paste with the flat of your hand or an icing polisher to create a smooth surface.

3 Use a rolling pin to lift the paste and lower it into position on the top of the cake. *Do not* moisten the surface of the cake. Remove the rolling pin and adjust the cloth so that it sits evenly on the top of the cake.

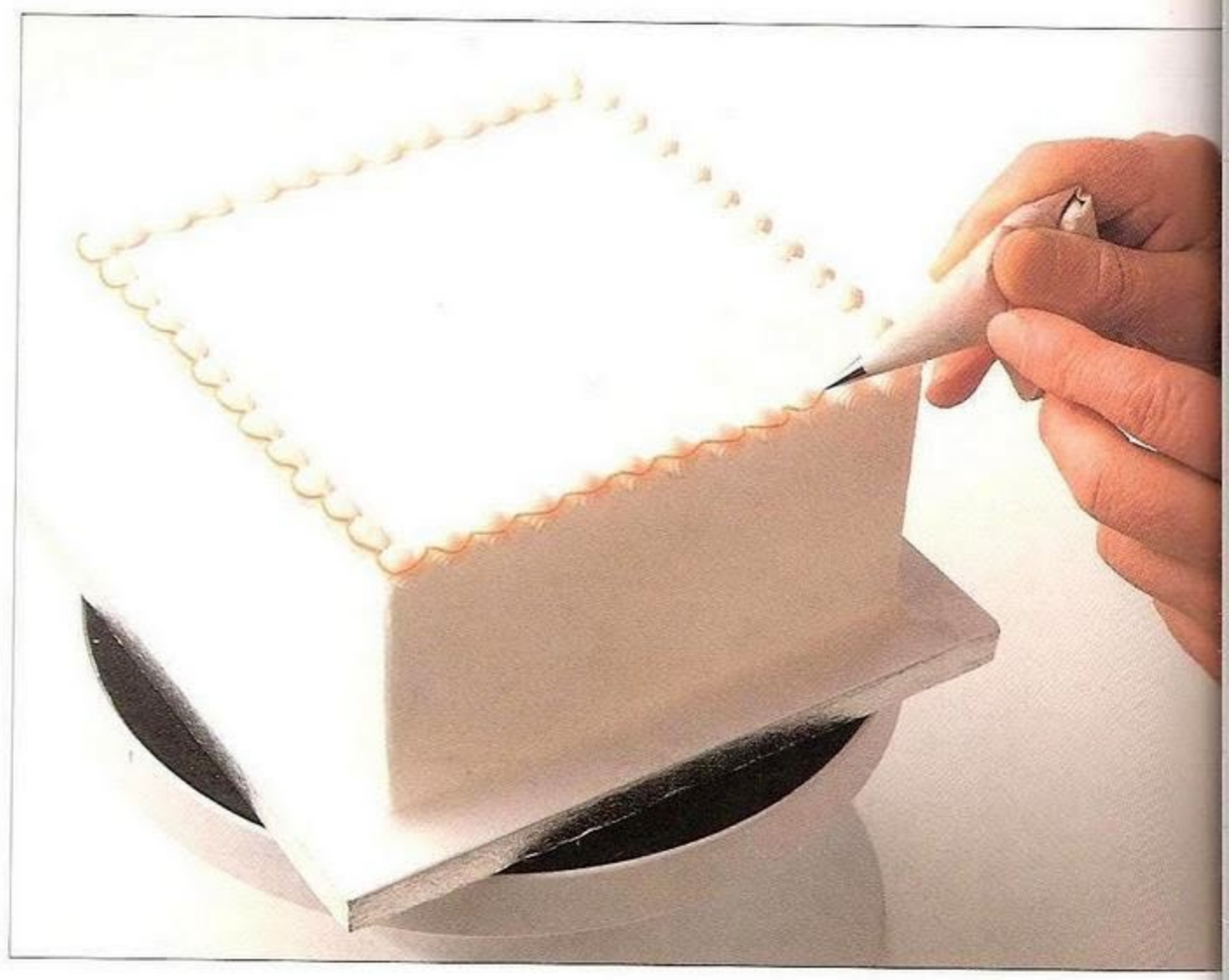


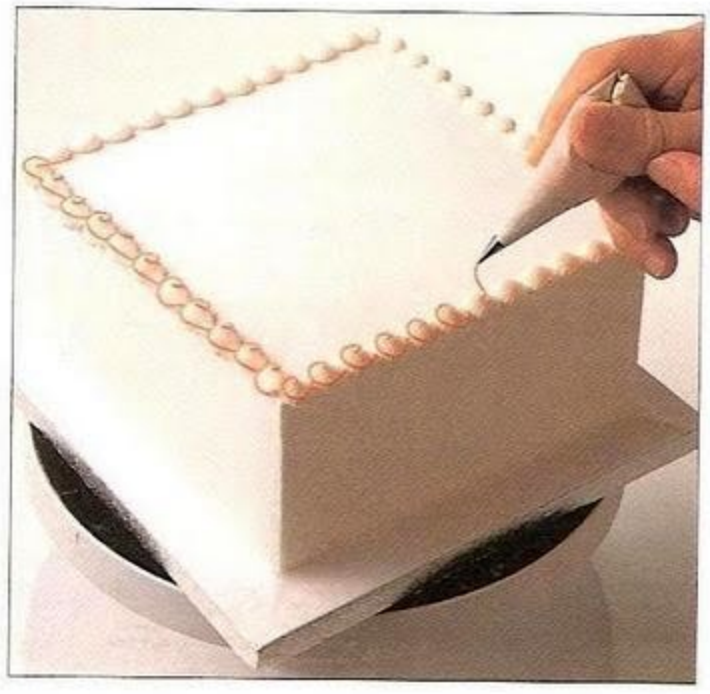
4 Create even folds around the edge with your fingers, and leave to dry. A 'tablecloth' can be added to round or square cakes, with or without a patterned edge. On a square cake, the points of the square 'cloth' should hang in the middle of the sides for a neat finish.



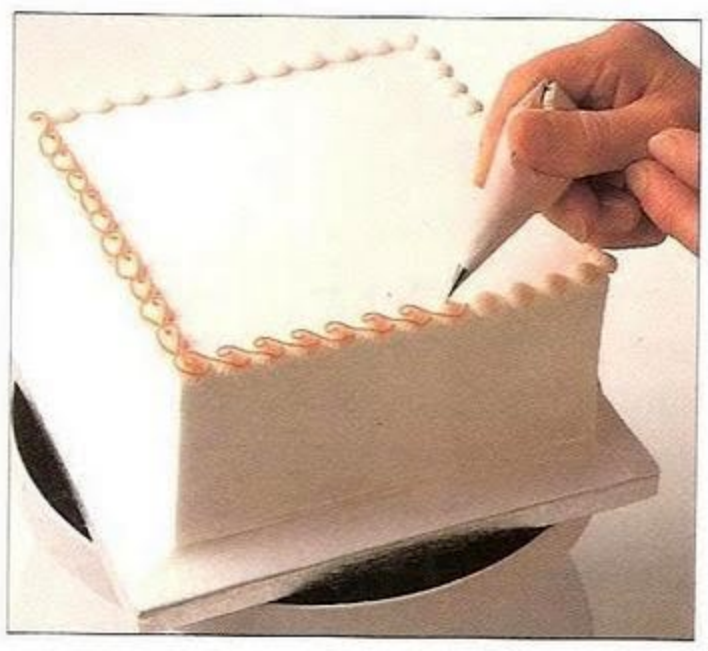
PIPING SHELLS

Use a star tube (tip) of a suitable size (usually no. 42, 43 or 44, depending on the size of the cake). Position the bag at an angle of 45° to the cake and pipe a bulb shape. Whilst pulling back, gradually decrease the pressure on the bag until a point is formed at the far end of the shell. Continue in this way until your design is complete. Shells may be overpiped. Here are some examples:





SIMPLE 'C' OVERPIPING Use a no. 1 tube to create a 'C' shape over each shell. Start from the centre of the shell and lift the icing, forming a 'C' shape over the top of the shell, around the outside edge and finishing at the point.



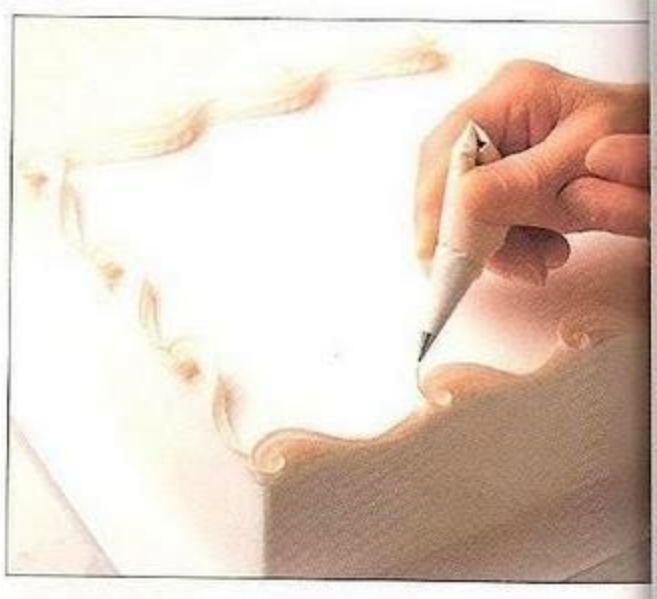
'S' SHAPE OVERPIPING Starting from the centre of one shell, lift the icing around the back of the shell, and bring the line of piping across the point of the first shell and over to the front of the second shell, ending at the point of the second shell.

OVERPIPING WITH LOOPS Start piping at the point of one shell, lift the icing across the front of the shell and touch down at the point of the next shell.

'S' SCROLL PIPING

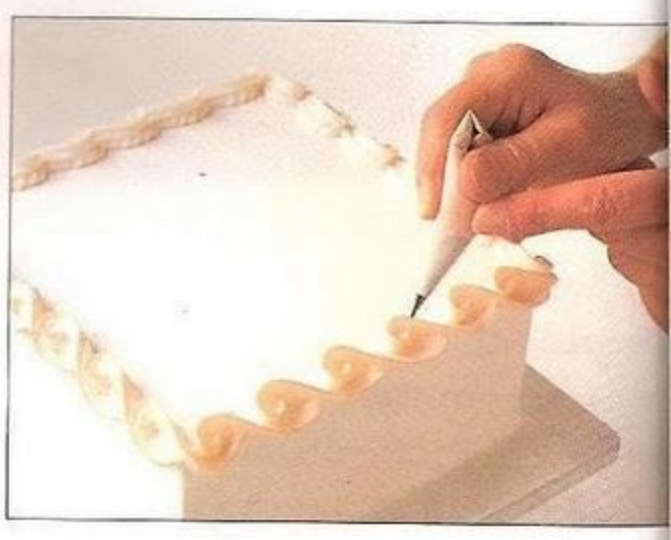
To pipe the 'S' scroll, use a star tube of a suitable size (usually no. 42, 43 or 44). Start with strong pressure and rotate the tube towards the centre of the cake, in an up-and-over motion. Decrease the pressure to form the back of the scroll, finishing by pulling the icing into a tail. The scroll design can be varied in the following ways:

OVERPIPING Overpipe 'S' scrolls first with a no. 42 tube held at an angle of 70° to the cake, pushing the icing into the scroll to fill any gaps



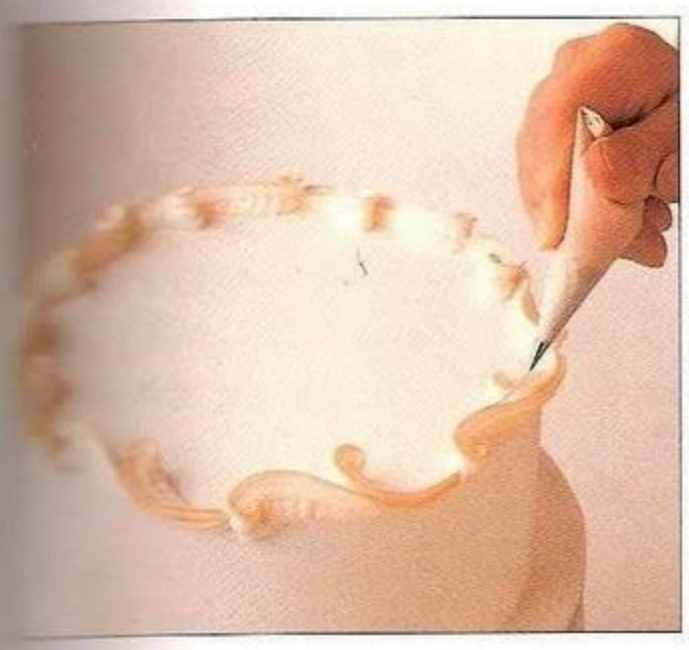
in the rope pattern, and to create smooth base for 3-2-1 overpiping.

LINKED SCROLLS Repeat the ' shape, this time taking the tail of t scroll over the edge of the cake. Tu the second 'S' scroll behind the t



of the first, thereby creating a linked effect. Overpipe using nos. 42, 3, 2 and 1 tubes.

'C' SCROLLS These scrolls are piped in a letter 'C' shape, starting with a bulb and rotating the tube outwards. Decrease the pressure on the bag to produce a fine tail.



'S' AND 'C' SCROLLS A further pattern is developed by piping 'S' and 'C' scrolls together. The 'S' and 'C' should touch tails to produce a slender finish.

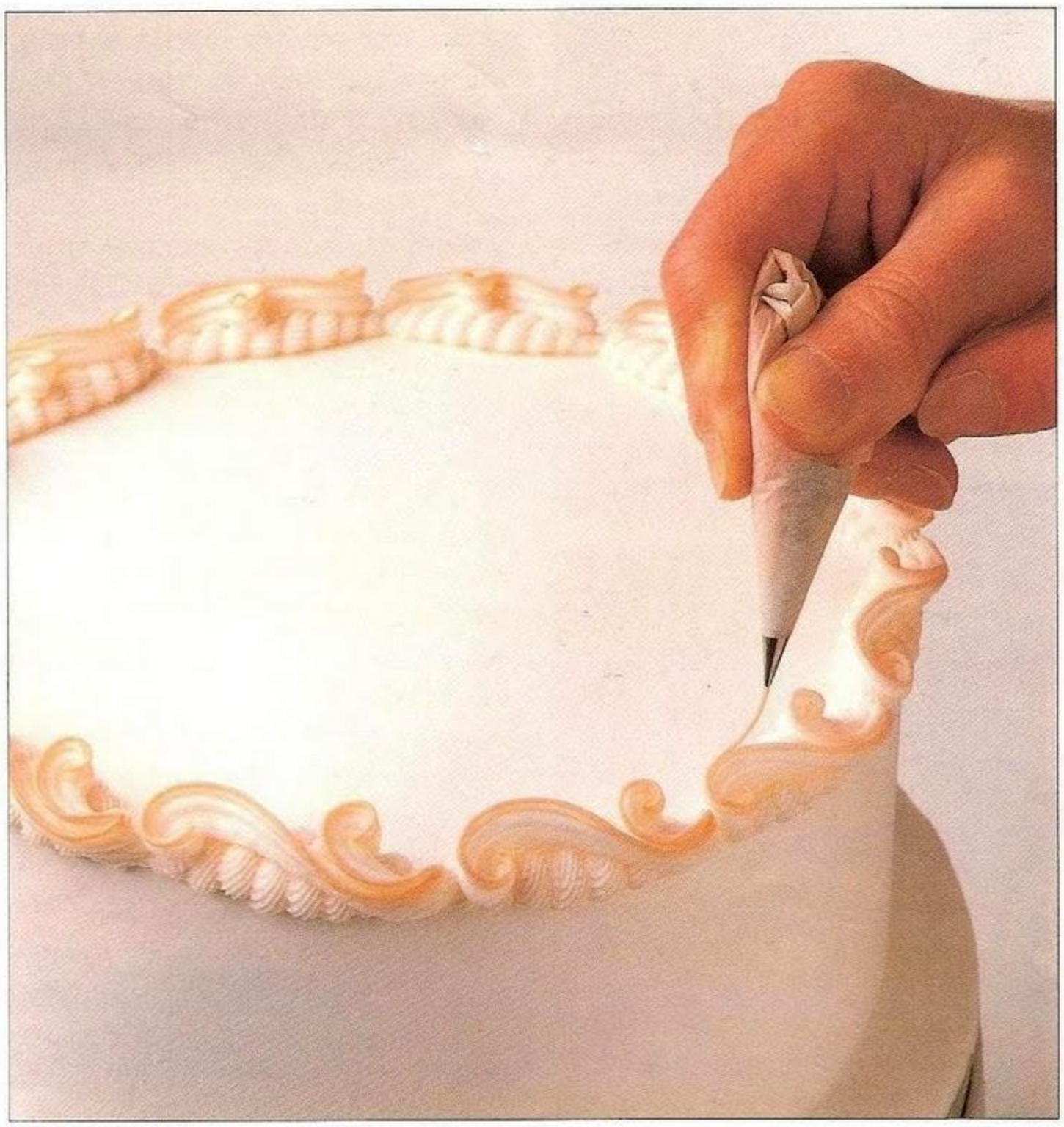
GRADUATED ROPE

The graduated rope design can be used around the top and bottom edge of a cake, and overpiped in various ways. Divide the edge of the cake into equal sections. Using a star tube (tip) and a small amount of pressure, pipe graduated rope piping between the divisions, rotating the line of icing. Build up pressure on the bag when piping the centre of each section, then decrease the pressure to the side.

OVERPIPING WITH LOOPS Overpipe the graduated rope with 3-2-1 loops.

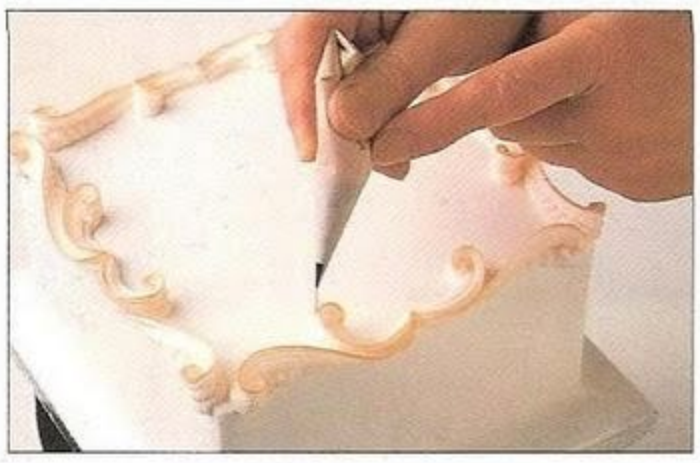
'S' SCROLL OVERPIPING Pipe an 'S' scroll on top of each section of graduated rope, then overpipe using nos. 42, 3, 2 and 1 tubes.

'S' AND 'C' SCROLL OVERPIPING Pipe 'S' and 'C' scrolls on top of each section of graduated rope, then overpipe using nos. 42, 3, 2 and 1 tubes.



MIRROR IMAGE PIPING

'S' AND 'C' TO CORNER To build up shape in the centre of each side of a square cake, pipe 'S' and 'C' scrolls from the centre point, graduating the tails down at the corners of the cake. Overpipe using nos. 42, 3, 2 and 1 tubes, to finish.



'S' AND 'C' TO SIDES To make the corners of a square cake appear larger, start the 'S' and 'C' scroll pattern at that point, graduating the tails down to the centre of each side.

DOUBLE 'S' AND 'C' An even bolder design is produced by piping two 'S' scrolls, one slightly larger than the other, and then adding a 'C' scroll, and overpiping as before.

Lily-of-the-Valley Cake

MATERIALS

20x15cm (8x6 inch) oval cake
Apricot glaze (page 13)
900g (2lb) marzipan (almond paste)
25x20cm (10x8 inch) oval cake drum
Royal icing made with albumen substitute (page 50)
Green food colouring
Ribbon to trim cake drum

EQUIPMENT

Icing ruler
Side scraper
Piping bags
Nos. 0, 1, 2, 3, 42 and 44 piping tubes (tips)

1 Brush the cake with apricot glaze, and coat in marzipan using the top and sides method on page 14. Leave to dry.

2 Apply three layers of royal icing, leaving to dry between coats (page 51). Coat the board (page 53) and leave to dry.

3 Trace the top design template (page 137) on to greaseproof paper, cut out and secure in position on top of the cake. Pipe 3-2-1 linework around the edge of the template (page 57). Remove the template.

4 Following the curves of the linework, pipe one large 'S' and two 'C' scrolls with a no. 44 tube (page 58). Following the remaining curve, pipe a row of shells with a no. 44 tube (page 58) along the opposite edge of the cake.

5 Pipe the mirrored pattern on the base edge of the cake and board with a no. 44 tube.

6 Overpipe the 'S' and 'C' scrol with a no. 42 tube, holding the tu in a vertical position and pressi very slightly on to the scroll shap to fill in any gaps and produce a fl surface for overpiping.

7 Overpipe the shells and scrol with 3-2-1 linework (page 57). Si linework may also be piped required. To make piping on t side of the cake easier, place a soli flat object under the edge of t front of the board to tilt the si upwards and provide a flatter su face to pipe on to.

8 Complete the design with gre stems and leaves, piped followi the shape of the template. (Tra and scribe the designs on page 1 for guidance, if required.) Pi small lily-of-the-valley directly to the cake (page 63), and grad ated bulbs to finish the design the top and sides of the cake.

9 To finish, attach a ribbon to t edge of the cake drum (see Expe Advice, below).

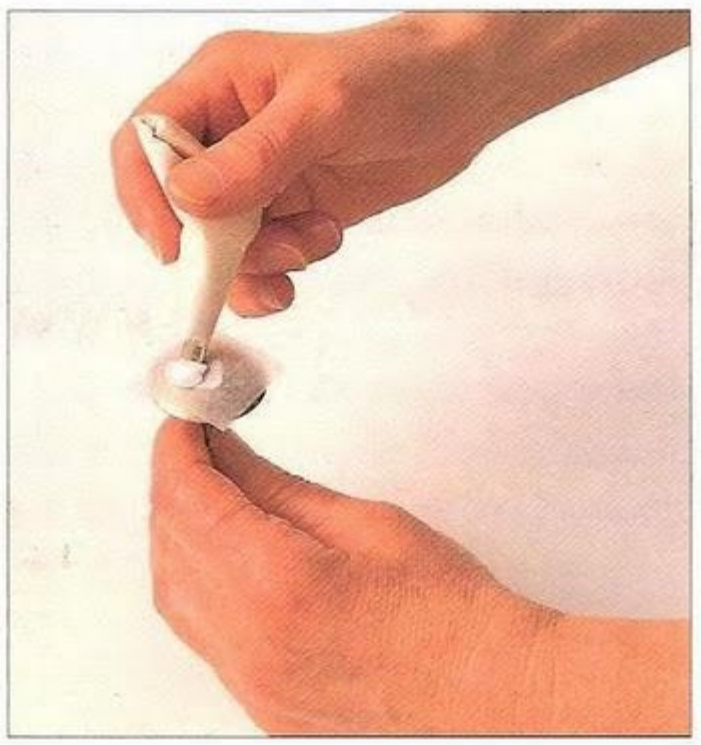
EXPERT ADVICE

When attaching ribbon to the edge of a cake drum or board, the best method is to apply double-sided sticky tape to the board before attaching the ribbon. Alternatively, use an ordinary glue stick (e.g. Pritt). Do not use royal icing as the ribbon will fall away when the icing dries.

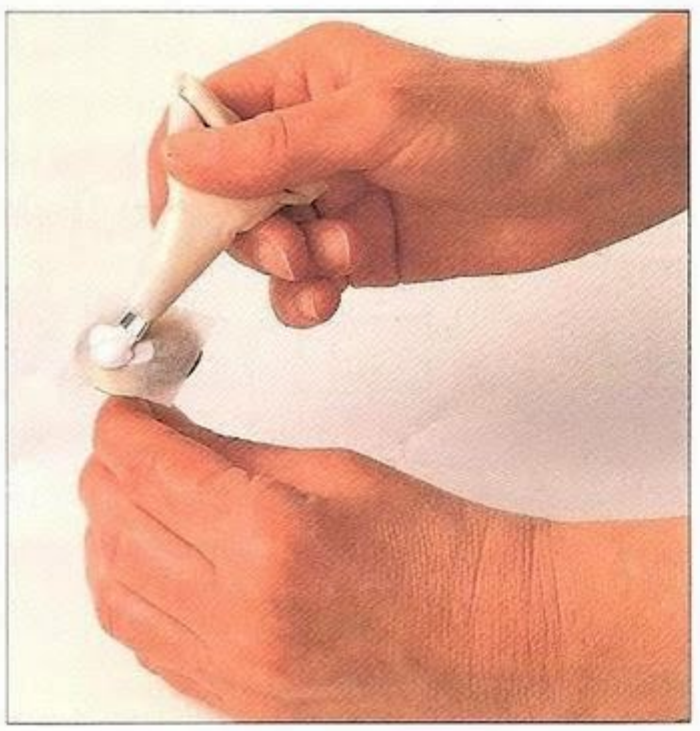
Piped Flowers

Piped flowers make a pretty addition to any cake, large or small, and are totally edible. Use petal piping tubes (both left- and right-handed tubes are available) and stiff royal icing. If available, add a few drops of acetic acid to the royal icing; this will make the icing stronger ('short'), and the petals will 'break away' more easily when piped. Most piped flowers are made on a flower nail, with small squares of greaseproof or waxed paper stuck to the nail with a little royal icing.

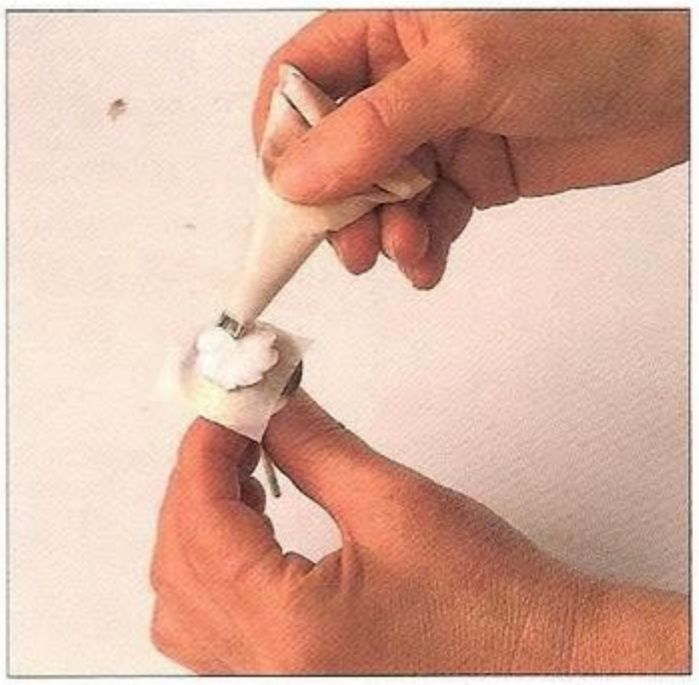
Daisy



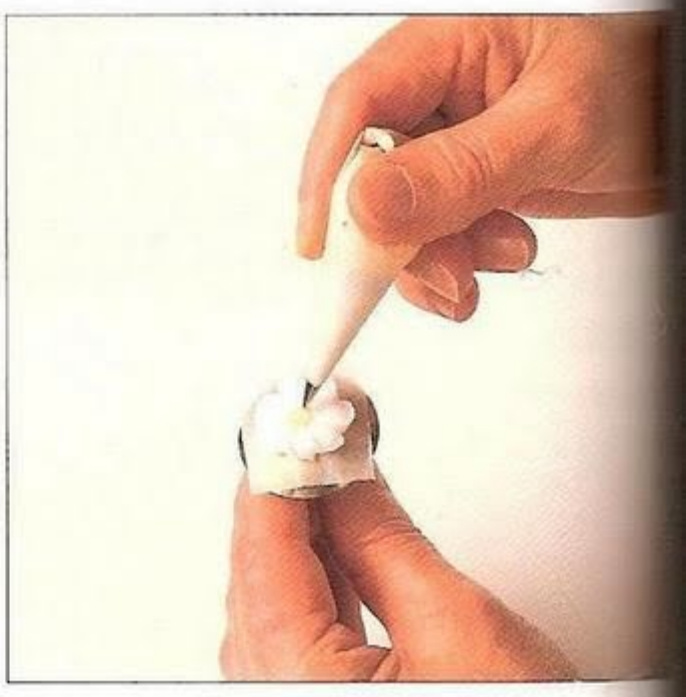
1 Use a no. 57 tube (tip). Lay the thick end of the tube on the centre of the flower nail. Lift the thin end of the tube up slightly (approximately 20°), and pipe the first petal using an upwards and downwards movement with the tube touching the surface of the paper. At the same time, turn the flower nail in an anti-clockwise direction (for right-handed piping) or clockwise direction (for left-handed piping).



2 Tuck the tube underneath the first petal and repeat the action.



3 Continue this process until you have completed six petals. When piping the final petal, lift the icing up over the first petal.



4 Make the centre, piping a series of small yellow dots with a no. 1 tube.

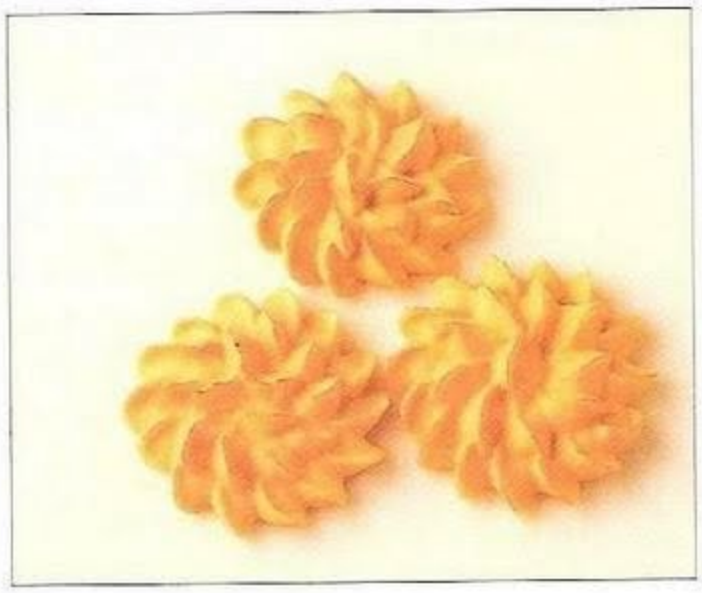
5 The flower can be removed from the nail, on its square of paper, while still soft.

Daffodil

The outside petals are formed in the same way as for the daisy (left). Pipe a centre vein on each petal using a damp, pointed no. 2 brush, drawing the brush towards the tip of the petal. The trumpet is piped with the nail held vertically and, when dry, may be painted as shown.

Pansy

Pipe two small petals as described for the daisy (left), one overlapping the other. Pipe a further two petals, one on either side of the first two. The final petal is piped in a semi-circular motion from the centre, turning the tube outwards, and then returning it to the centre. Paint the features on with a fine brush, and pipe in the centre stamen with royal icing.

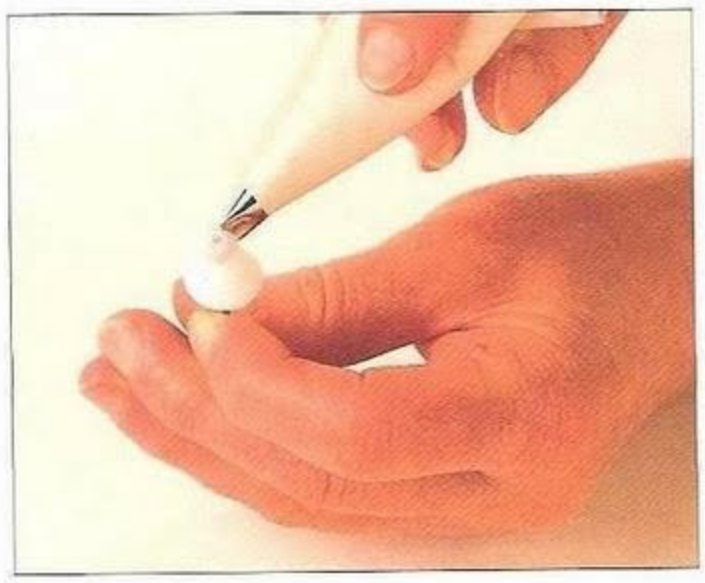


Chrysanthemum

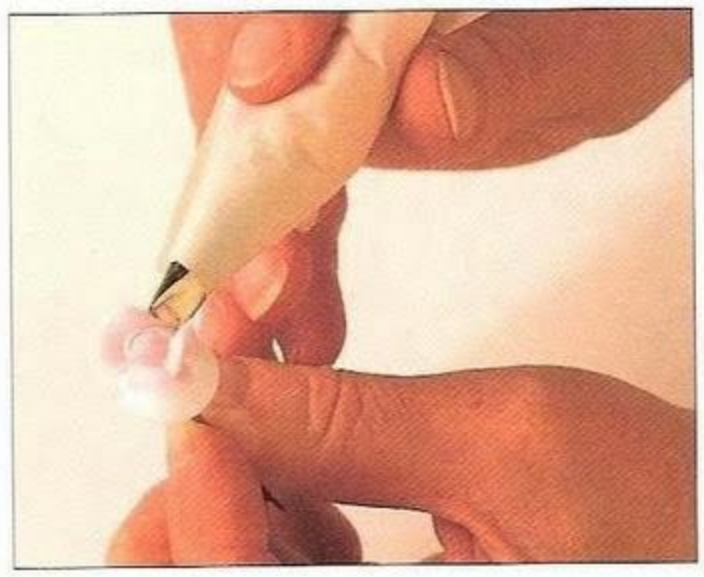
Pipe a ring of small petals as described for the daisy (left) around the outside edge of the nail. Pipe a further ring of petals inside the first, finally adding a few petals to fill up the centre. When set, dust with a little powder colour.

Rose

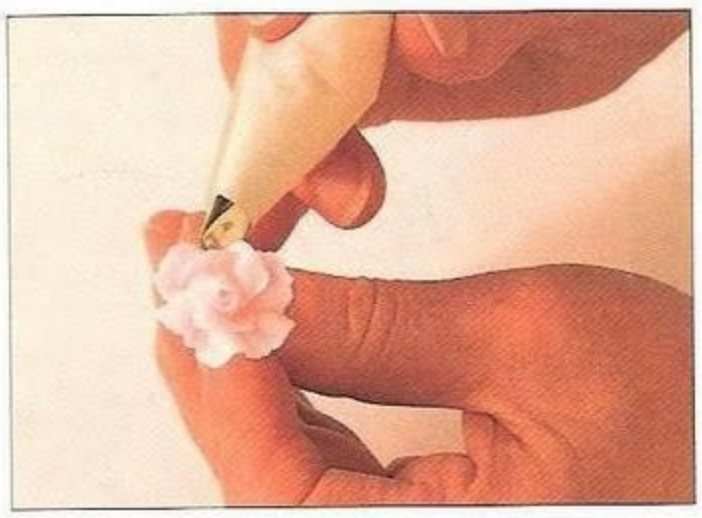
A specially designed rose nail or 'cone' is available. This has a non-stick surface that can be piped on to directly without the need for grease-proof or waxed paper.



1 Hold the piping bag so that the pointed end of the tube is at the top, over the centre of the rose cone. Pipe a bud by squeezing the icing out to stick to the cone, and then turning the nail 360° in an anti-clockwise (right-handed piping) or clockwise (left-handed piping) direction. Finish with a downwards action to break the icing off.

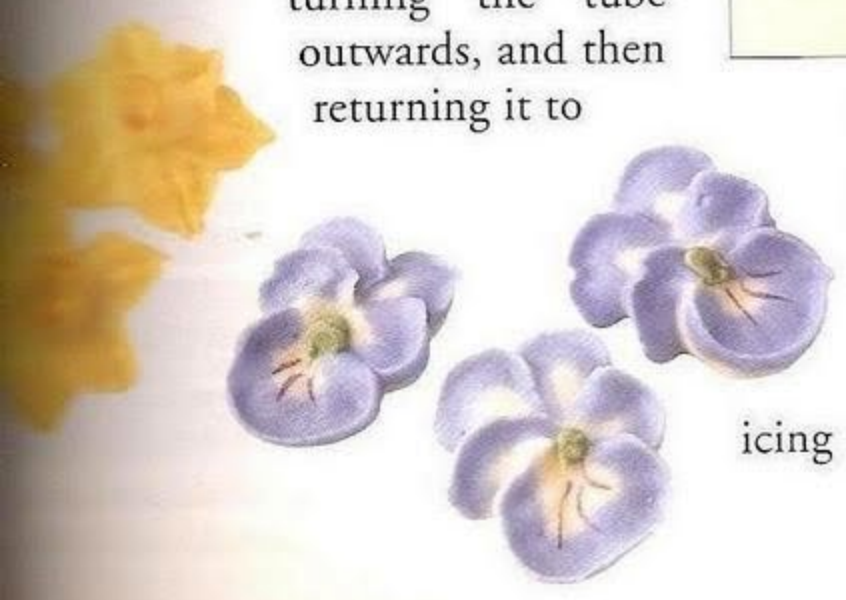


2 Pipe the first row of three petals, this time positioning the narrow point of the tube out slightly, and using an upwards and then a downwards motion to create each petal, turning the cone at the same time.



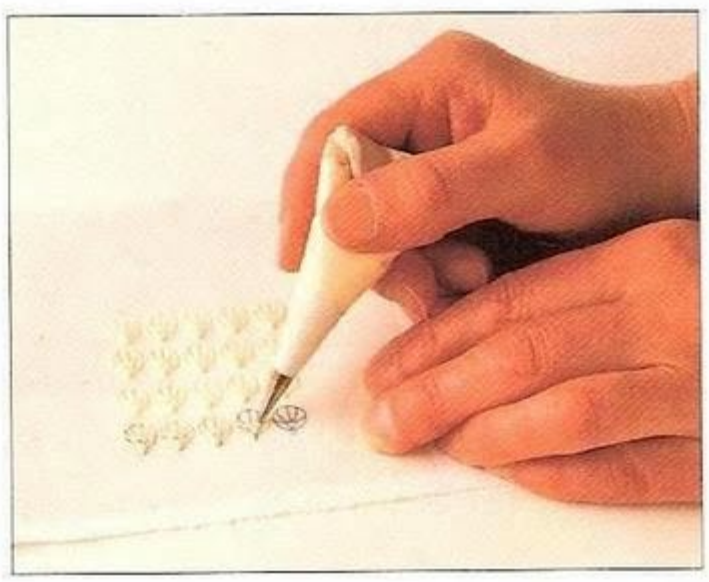
3 Add the final row of five petals, using the same method as before. Leave to dry on the cone.

4 When set, remove the rose carefully from the cone and fill the back with royal icing piped with a no. 1 tube. Leave to dry, then pipe on a calyx with a no. 1 tube and green royal icing. Leave to dry.

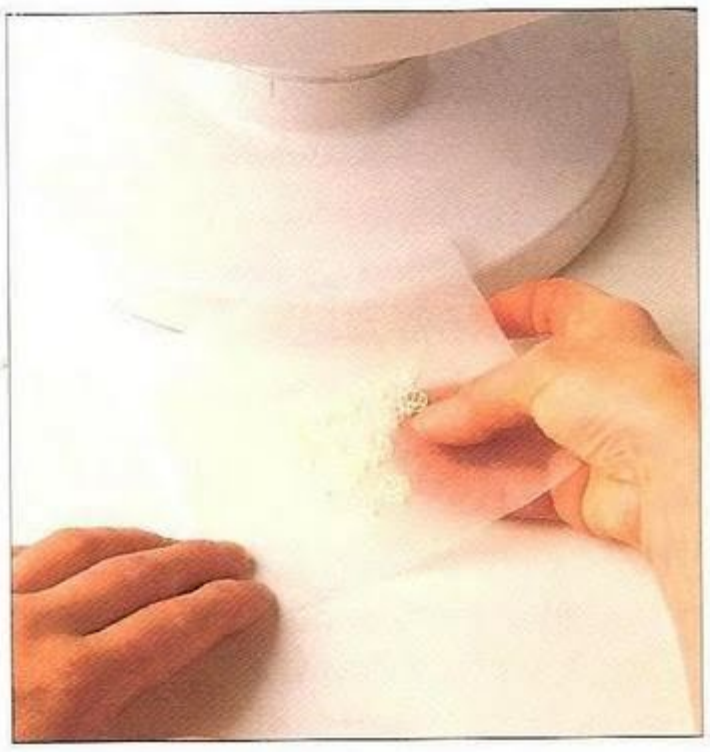


LACE

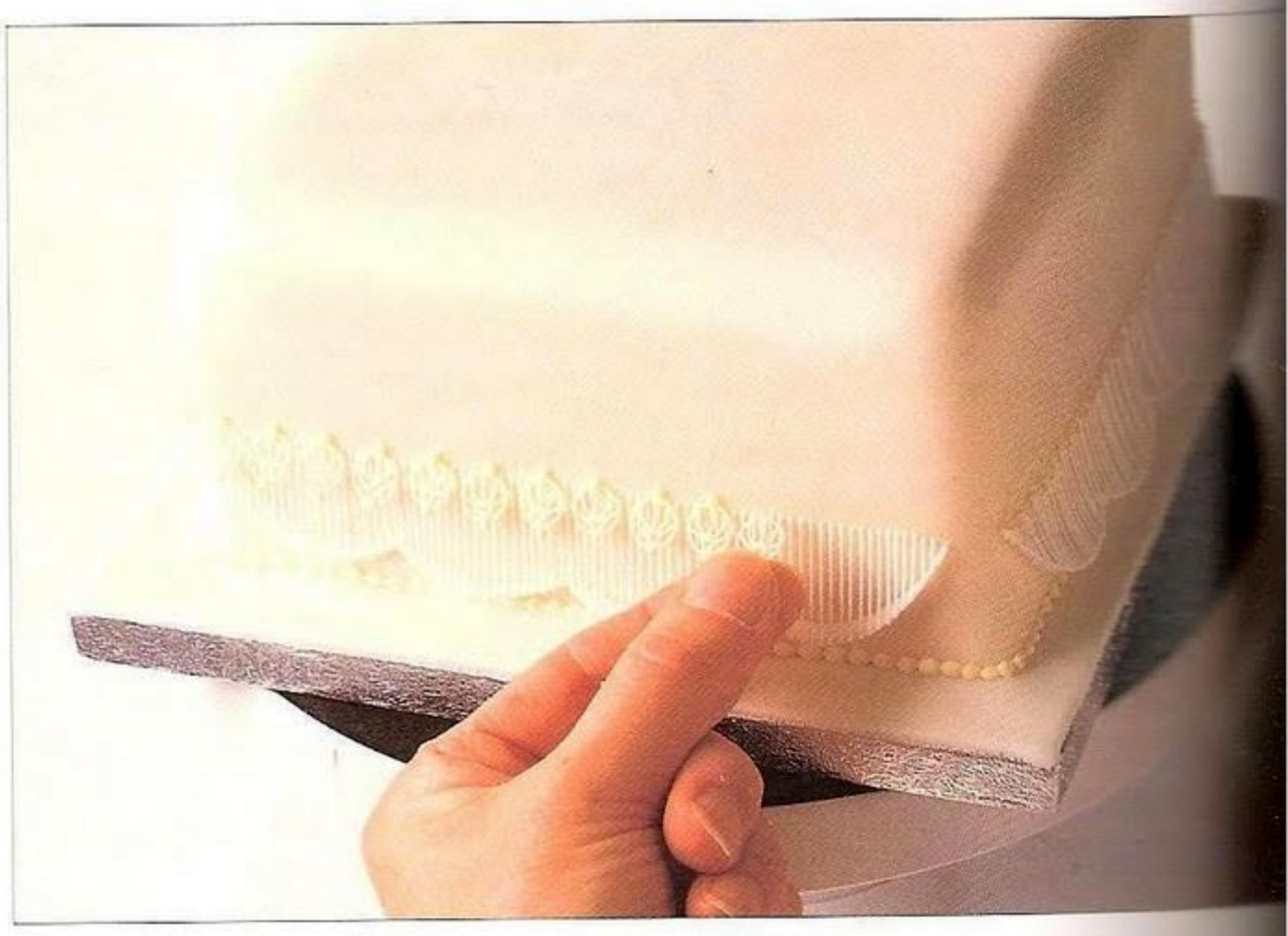
This is a very delicate decoration which can be used on many types of cake, large or small, royal iced or sugarpasted. You will need to use strong royal icing (made using pure albumen, page 50) for this technique.



1 Trace your chosen pattern (page 136) on to paper. Place waxed paper over the top and pipe the outlines carefully with a no. 0 tube (tip), ensuring that the lines touch where designed, giving strength to the lace. Take care not to pipe one line through another as this will weaken the lace structure.



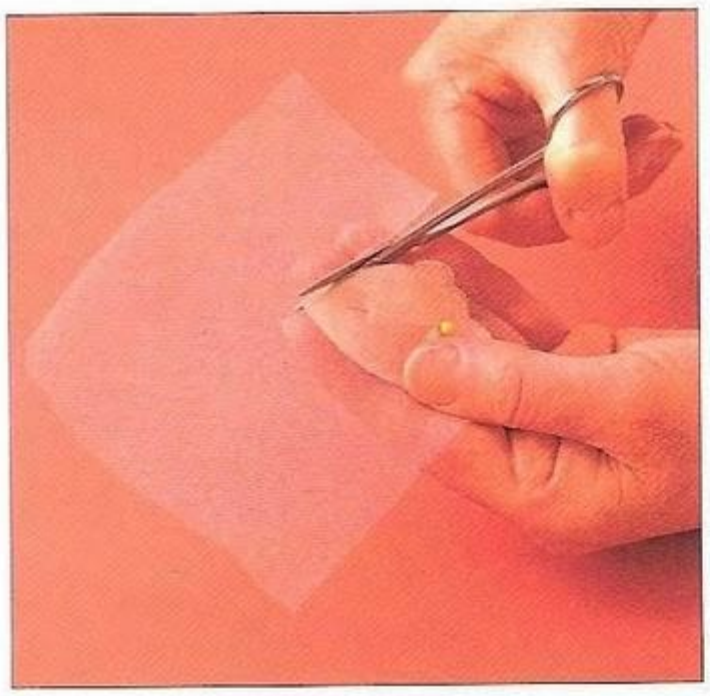
2 When dry, carefully lift the lace by folding back the waxed paper and sliding the lace on to your thumb.



3 Attach to the surface of the cake with a little dot of royal icing, piped on to the edge of the piece of lace.

TULLE

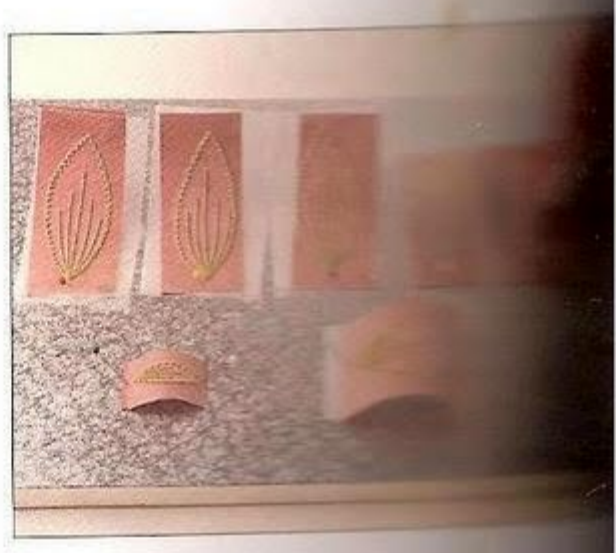
This is a good way of making a fine, delicate, yet strong, decoration. Choose a good, strong nylon tulle.



1 Trace the patterns (page 136) on to greaseproof paper. Pin the pattern pieces to tulle and cut out the shapes.

2 Cut pieces of thin card, slightly larger than the tulle pieces, and curl gently over a knife blade. Cut waxed

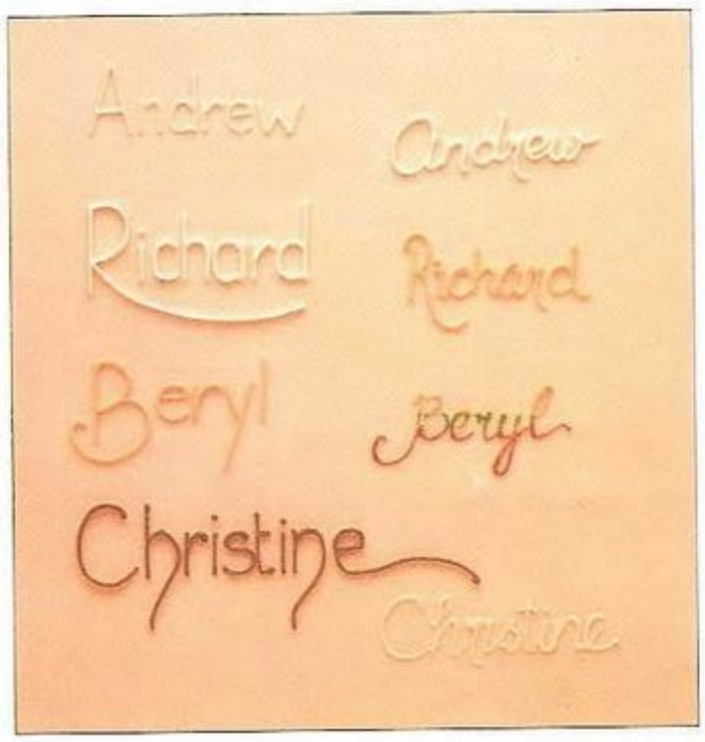
paper the same size and l
card. Pin these to a
securing the sheets of
shapes together.



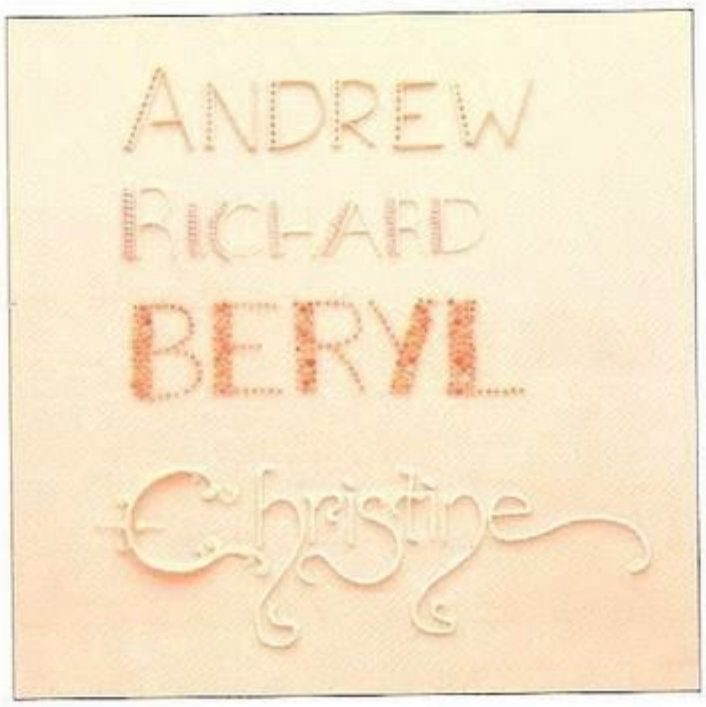
3 Place the tulle
tion on the card
your fingertips. Pipe
the tulle with
tube. Release the
tre veins and leave

LETTERING

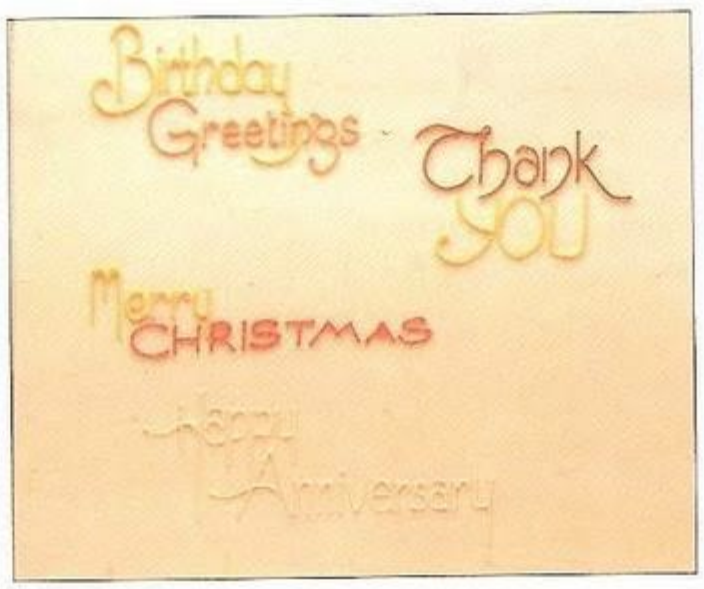
This method of personalizing cakes and sending messages to the recipient should always be legible. Match the style of lettering not only to the cake design, but to the recipient of the cake. For example, small children can more easily read lettering in upper and lower case letters. Templates for lettering and numerals are provided on pages 141–142.



1 The lettering shown here is piped with a no. 1 tube (tip). Pipe the lettering in a colour to match the colour of the cake. Mistakes can be easily removed without leaving marks. Coloured overpiping can then be added. Having practised simple lettering, flounces and embellishments can be added if required.

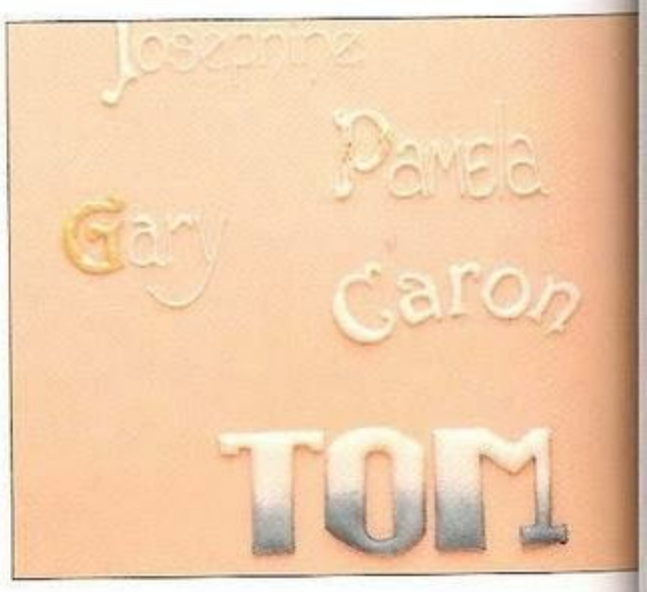


2 Different techniques in piping can further style the lettering using lines, dots and loops.

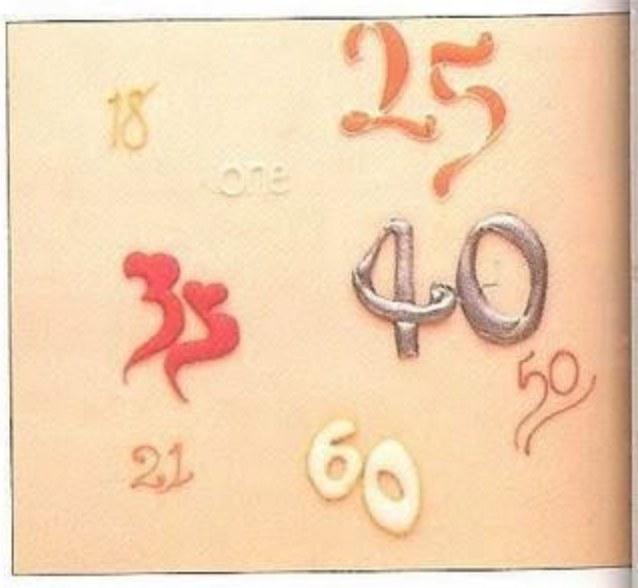


3 Inscriptions such as 'Happy Anniversary' are often added to cakes. Practise on waxed paper and hold this in position over the cake to judge where you will pipe the final design. Practise to develop your own personal style.

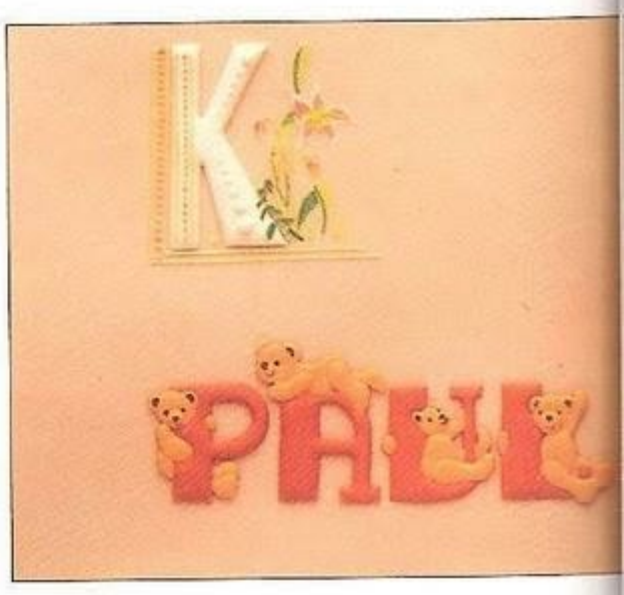
4 Runout lettering gives a bolder effect. Use a runout first letter only, if you wish, when writing in straight lines. Runout complete names can be arranged more easily in curves (e.g. Caron). Glue into position with a little soft royal icing when



you have achieved the desi arrangement.



5 Numerals can be treated many ways, either piped directly to the cake or in runout form.



6 Illuminated letters can be u where there is no other decorati or when the lettering is a featur the decoration.

SUGAR FLOWERS

Moulding sugar flowers is an absorbing aspect of sugarcraft. Besides being used to decorate cakes, sugar flowers can be made into attractive arrangements in their own right, as table centrepieces, bouquets or gifts. There are many basic methods for making flowers, starting with 'pulled' flowers, such as freesias, primroses and jasmine. Different techniques are used to make 'cutter' flowers, which include orchids, roses and carnations. Combined with sugar foliage and ribbon loops, etc., they all look most attractive arranged in sprays, bouquets or posies, or in natural settings.

MAKING AND USING FLOWER PASTE

The paste required to make fine flowers and foliage is available commercially under a variety of names (e.g. flower paste and petal paste), but you can make your own if necessary.

Flower Paste

You will need a heavy-duty mixing machine with a beater attachment for this recipe to produce a good result. This flower paste cannot be made by hand, using a hand-held electric mixer or in a food processor.

400g (14oz) icing (confectioners') sugar
50g (2oz/ ½ cup) cornflour
3 teaspoons gum tragacanth or 2 teaspoons gum tragacanth and 2 teaspoons carboxy-methyl-cellulose (CMC)
5 teaspoons cold water
2 teaspoons powdered gelatine
3 teaspoons white vegetable fat (shortening)
2 teaspoons liquid glucose
1 large egg white, strained

1 Sift the sugar, cornflour and gum tragacanth together into the bowl from your machine, and warm. This can be done in a variety of ways: a metal or glass bowl can be placed in a low-heat oven; a plastic bowl can be put in the microwave on a warm setting. Alternatively, place the bowl over a pan of hot water. In all cases, cover the bowl with a clean tea-towel to stop the surface of the dry ingredients crusting, and warm the beater from the machine as well. Be careful not to make the ingredients too hot. They should be just warm to the touch.

2 Measure the water into a cup or small container and add the gelatine. Allow to stand for a few minutes to 'sponge', i.e. for the gelatine crystals to absorb the water.

3 Warm the gelatine mixture by standing the cup in hot water until the mixture is runny and clear.

4 Add the white fat and liquid glucose to the gelatine mixture and stir until the fat has melted.

EXPERT ADVICE

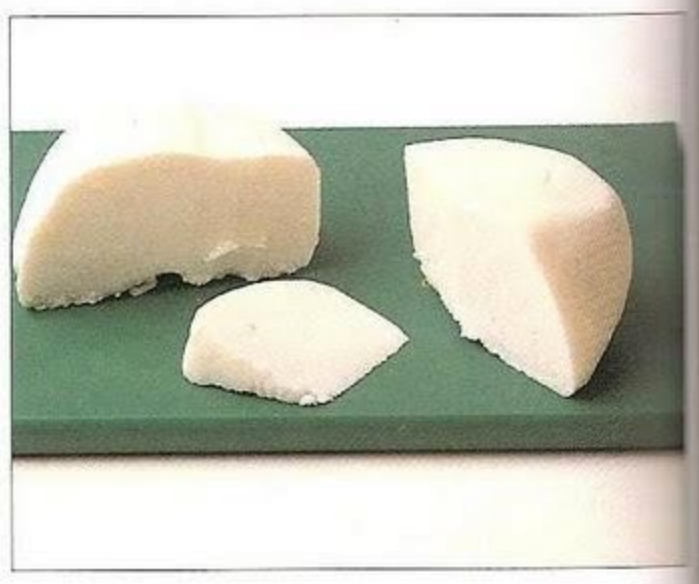
Liquid glucose is difficult to measure because it is extremely sticky. Use a wet spoon or the spoon the fat was measured with. Remember to use level spoon measures.

5 Add the gelatine mixture and the egg white to the warmed, dry ingredients, and mix together on a slow speed until the ingredients are incorporated together.

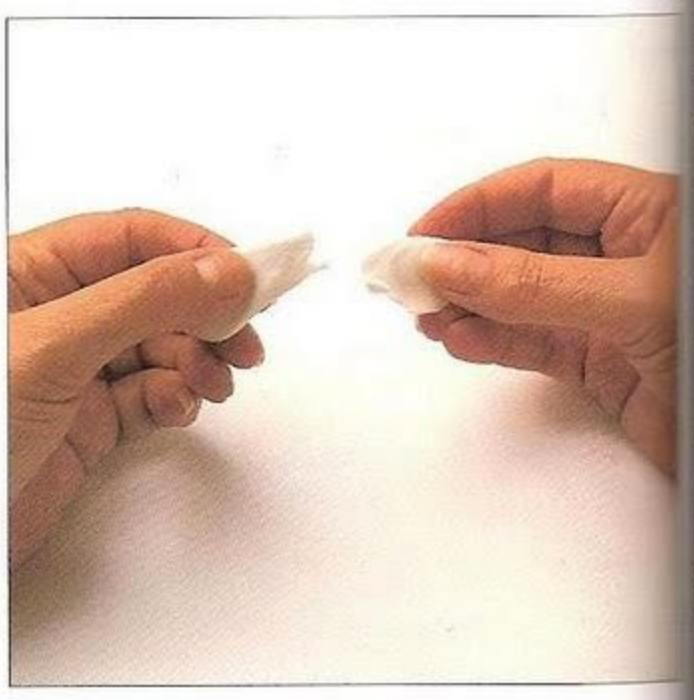
6 Turn the mixer to full speed and beat until the paste becomes white and stringy. If you hear the machine motor straining, turn the speed down a little.

7 Remove the paste from the bowl and immediately wrap in a polythene bag. Place in a small, plastic, lidded container, and place in the refrigerator to mature for 24 hours before use. For ease of use, wrap small pieces of paste individually before chilling.

HANDLING FLOWER PASTE



1 When you take the paste from the refrigerator it will be very hard. This is an indication that the recipe has worked successfully. Cut off a small amount of paste and knead well. The paste becomes workable with the warmth of your hands and the friction caused whilst kneading it. Alternatively, warm in the microwave on defrost for about 30 seconds, then knead with fingertips.



2 The paste should be quite elastic and will 'snap' when you pull it apart. The paste dries out quickly, so keep it covered, either in a polythene bag or a small pot.

MAKING THE PASTE WORK FOR YOU

You may have to add extra amounts of some of the ingredients so that the paste performs to your liking.

CORNFLOUR Add extra if the paste is soft and too elastic. This may be due to the type of paste used, too much liquid added at the mixing stage, kneading with very hot hands, or colouring the paste with liquid or paste colouring.

EGG WHITE Add extra if the paste is too dry. This may be due to there not being enough liquid in the mix, or to the paste being old.

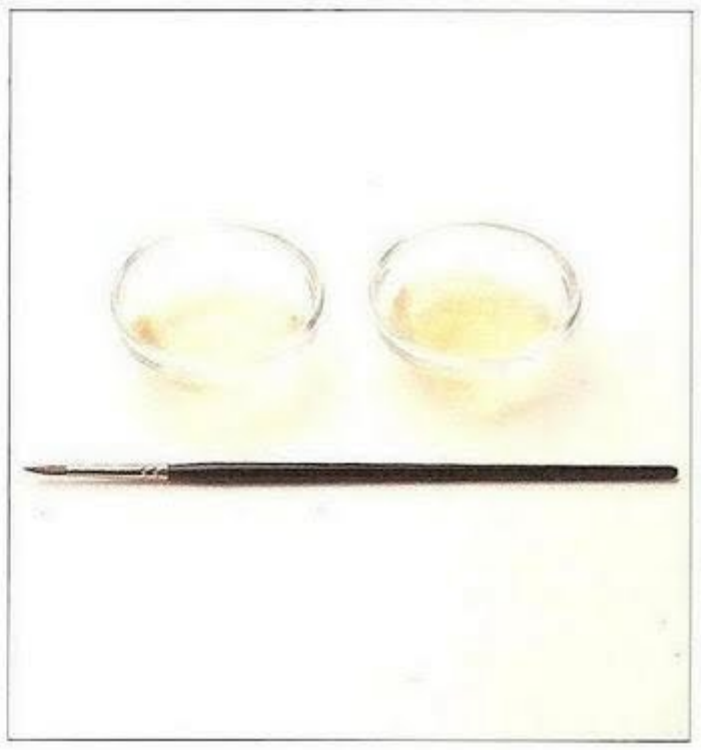
WHITE FAT Add extra if the paste is very firm. This may be due to the type of paste used, the paste starting to dry out, or colouring the paste with a powder colouring. If the paste is feeling sticky (due to the addition of too much extra egg white), add more white fat to balance the ingredients.

GUM TRAGACANTH Add extra if the paste is soft and doesn't 'snap'. This may be due to the type of paste used, or to adding too little or insufficiently warm gum.

USING GLUE

Edible glue is frequently used when making sugar flowers. There is a wide choice for you to select from. We don't think any one has any advantage over the others.

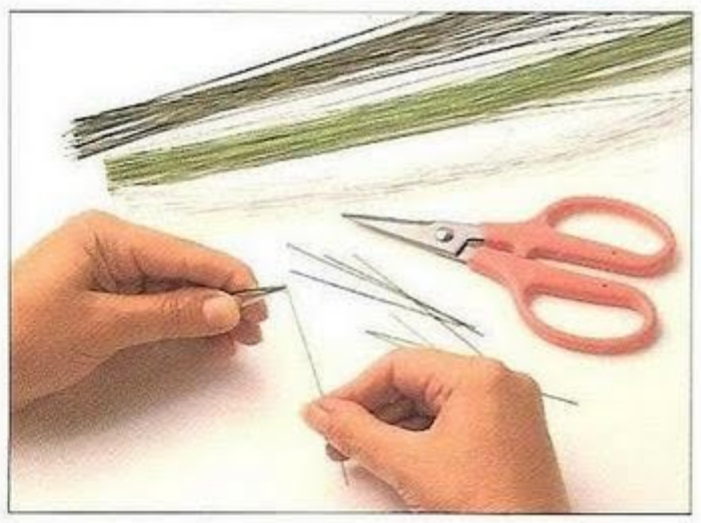
FRESH EGG WHITE This is simple to use but we do not recommend it for flowers that are to be used on a cake due to the slight risk of salmonella being present.



RECONSTITUTED ALBUMEN POWDER Place 5 teaspoons cool boiled water in a small jar. Add 1 teaspoon pure albumen, pop the lid on, shake well and leave overnight.

GUM ARABIC SOLUTION Place 10 teaspoons orange flower water in a small jar. Add 2 teaspoons gum arabic powder, pop the lid on, shake well and leave overnight to soak. This produces a jelly.

PREPARING WIRES



Wires are graded in SWG or 'gauge'. The higher the number, the finer the wire. Wires for sugar flowers are available in many different coloured paper wraps. Remove a small bundle of wires from the packet and cut into four smaller lengths, using heavy-duty scissors or wire cutters. Providing the paste on your flower is still soft and not dry you should be able to use your wire straight. However, if your paste starts to dry prematurely you may need to make a small hook in the end of the wire to bed it into the paste. You may also need to use hooked wires for larger flowers as this gives extra strength and support to the base of the flower. An easy way to form a hook in a wire is to turn the end over using a small pair of pointed tweezers.

STEAMING

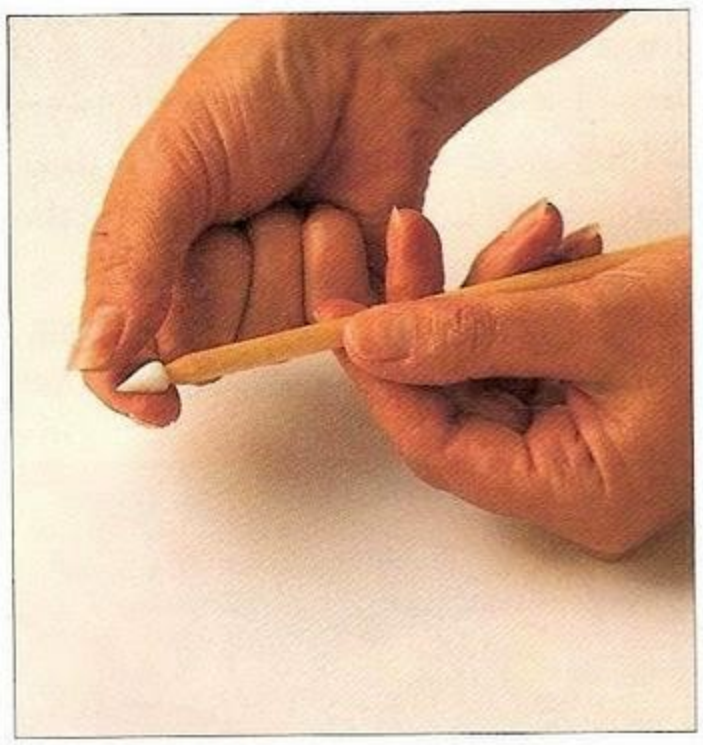
Steaming sets the powder colour into the paste and gives a slight natural sheen to the flowers. By repeating the steaming process you can build up a stronger gloss. When steaming, you are actually cooking the outer layer of sugar. To steam flowers safely, boil a kettle until you get a full jet of steam from the spout. Hold the flower or leaf in the jet of steam for a second or two. (You will need to hold the switch on for automatic kettles.) Leave to dry for a few minutes. Steaming is also ideal for refreshing sprays of flowers which have become dusty or dull. Just move the spray around in the jet of steam for 5 seconds or so, or until all the flowers shine. Leave the spray to dry.

PULLED FLOWERS

Also known as filler flowers, this is a good place to start when learning to use flower paste.

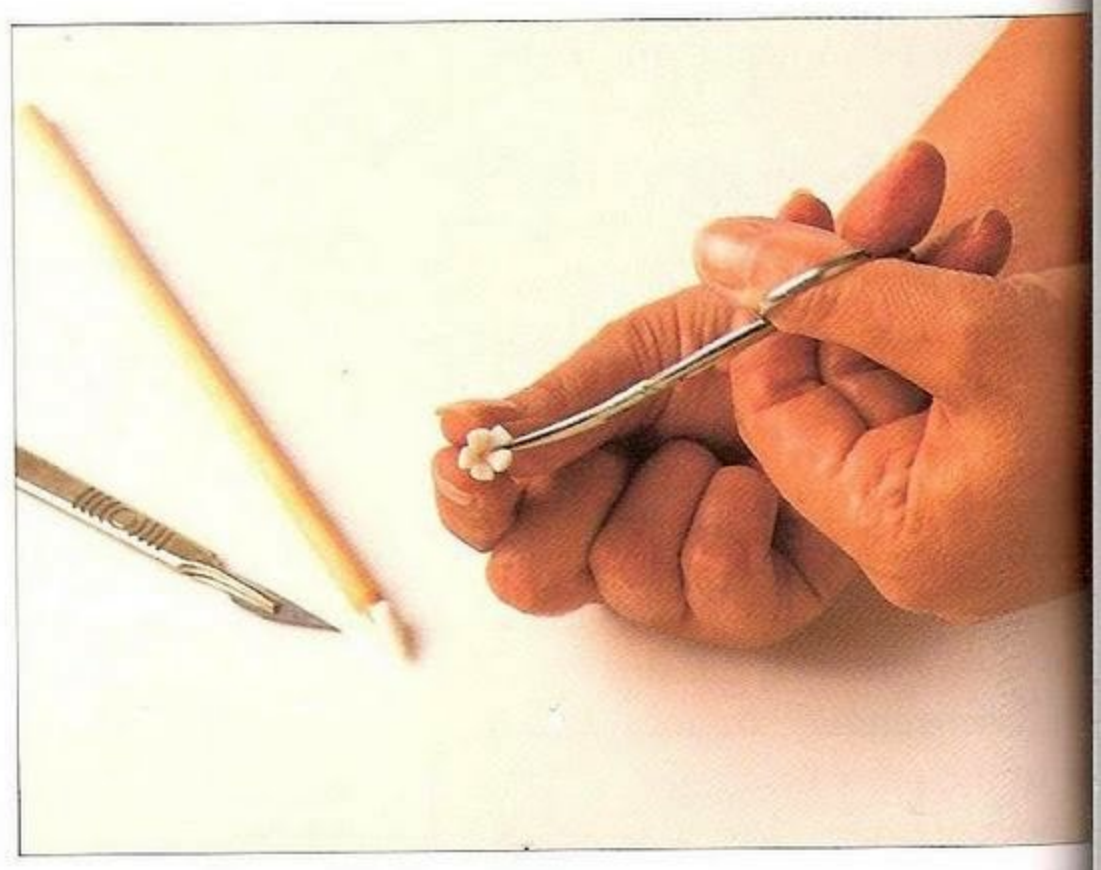
Jasmine

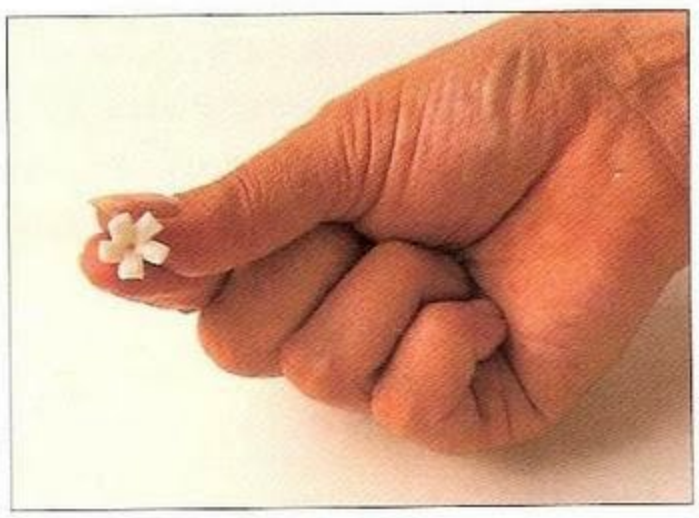
1 Take a small piece of white paste and roll it into a ball (above left). Model to a teardrop shape (above right).



2 Dip the pointed end of a dowel into white fat (shortening) and rub into the wood. This will stop the paste sticking to the dowel. Push the pointed end of the dowel into the rounded end of the teardrop.

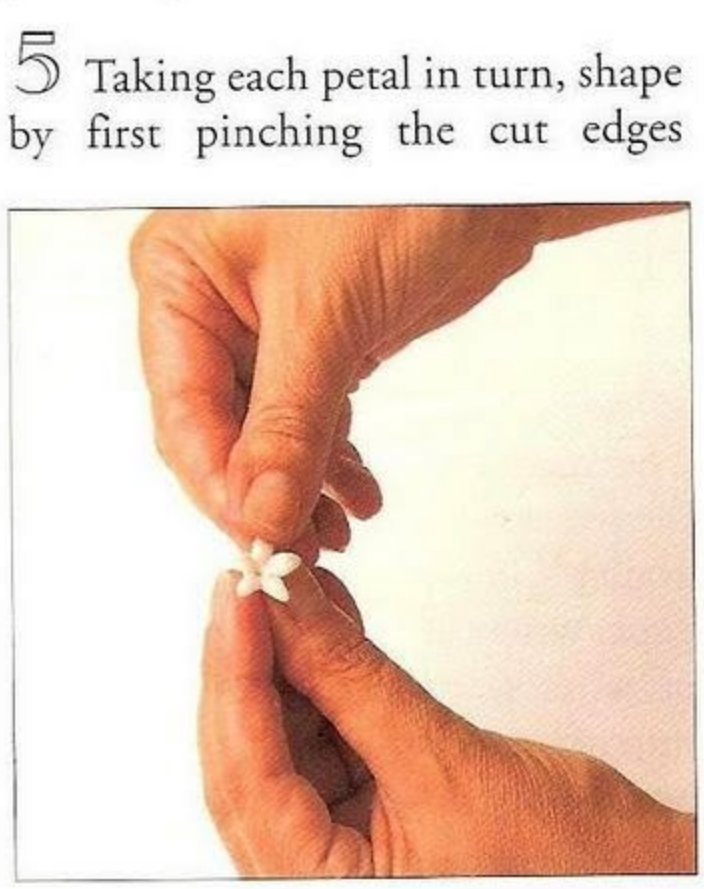
3 Either cut five equal-sized slits with a scalpel into the large end of the teardrop only before removing it from the dowel (right), or remove the teardrop from the dowel and cut with fine pointed scissors (far right).

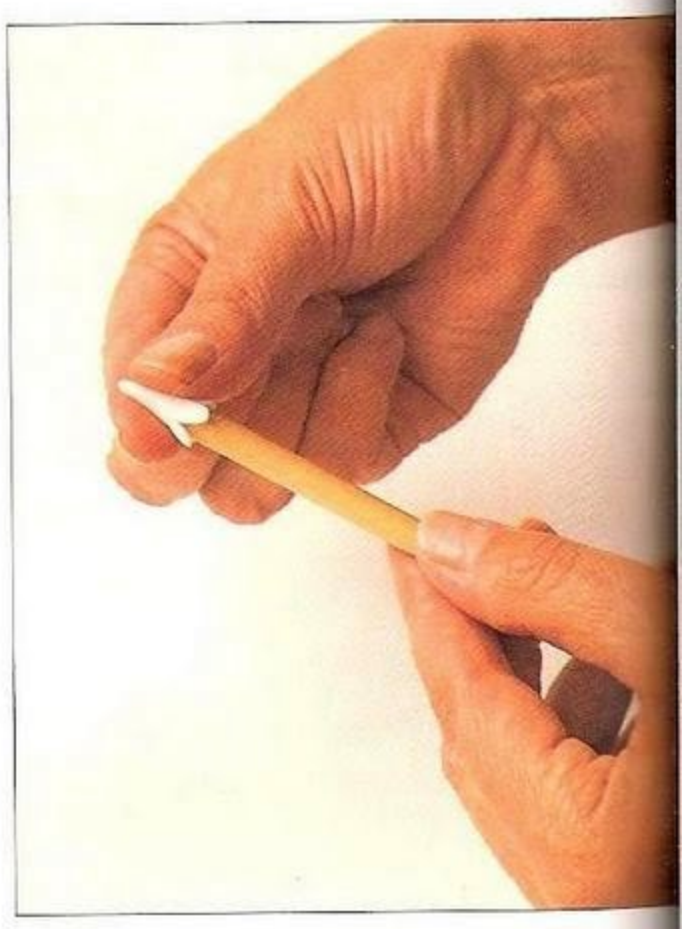




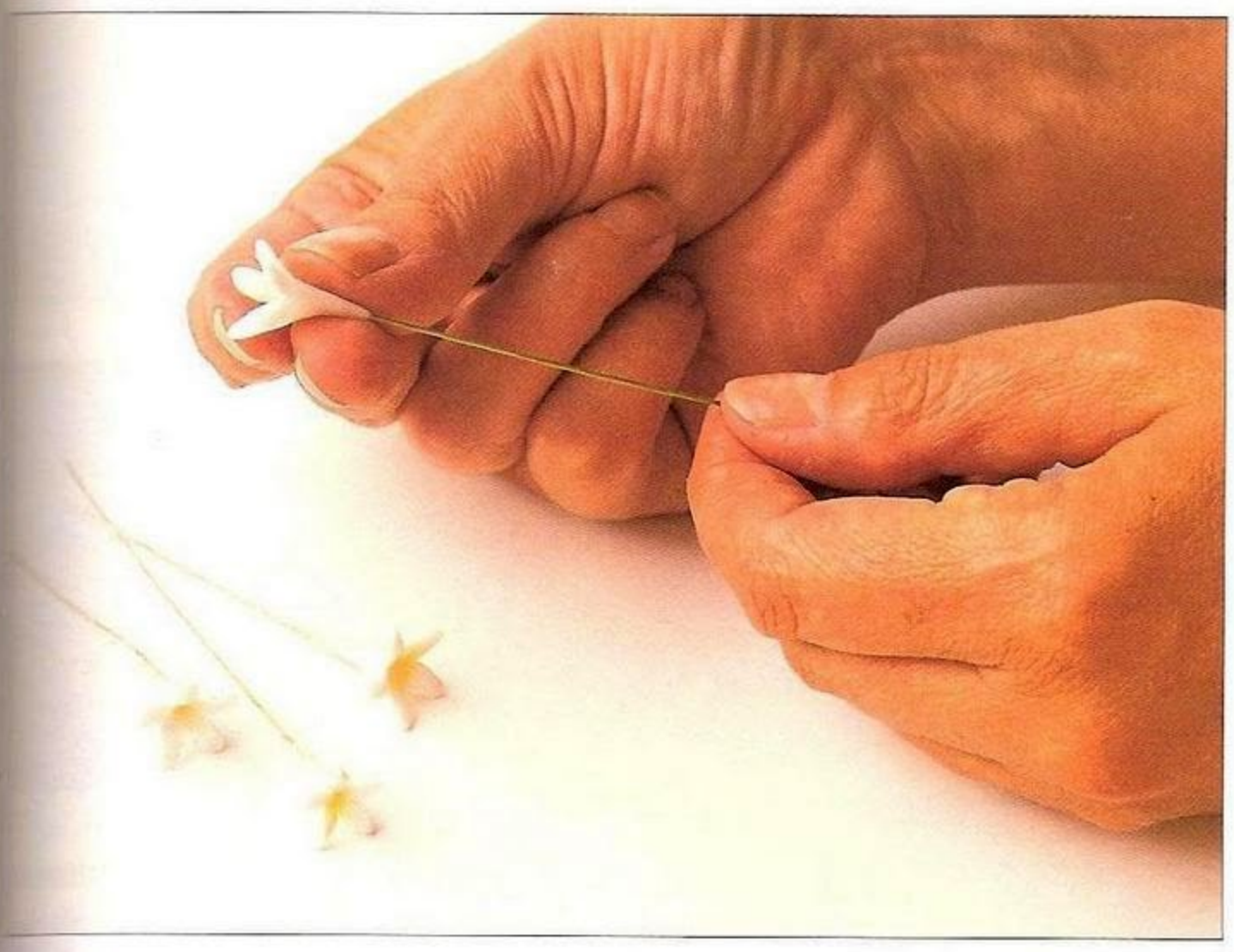
4 Open up the petals by pushing your finger into the centre.

5 Taking each petal in turn, shape by first pinching the cut edges inwards and then squashing fla with your thumb on the top an your index finger on the underside Finish this action with a gentle flic upwards with your thumb.





6 Place the pointed end of th dowel back into the centre of th flower and ease the petals upward gently to produce a more natur shape.

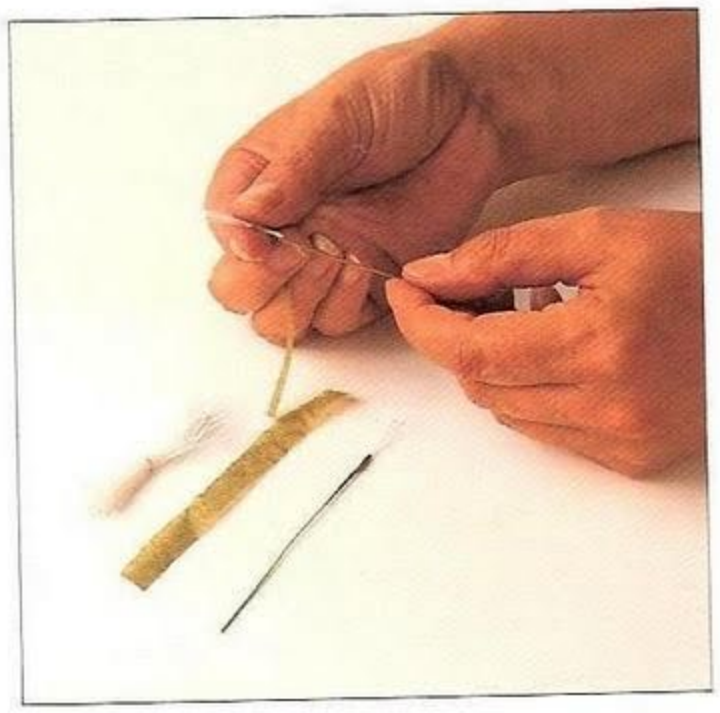


EXPERT ADVICE

There are many types of jasmine, making it an ideal flower for a variety of uses. It is quick and simple to make and is therefore a good 'filler' flower. The winter jasmine is a lovely dark yellow colour; summer jasmine is white with a yellow centre and a touch of pink on the petals. Copying the real flower, if in season, or looking in a good botanical reference book, will help you achieve the most lifelike shapes and colours.

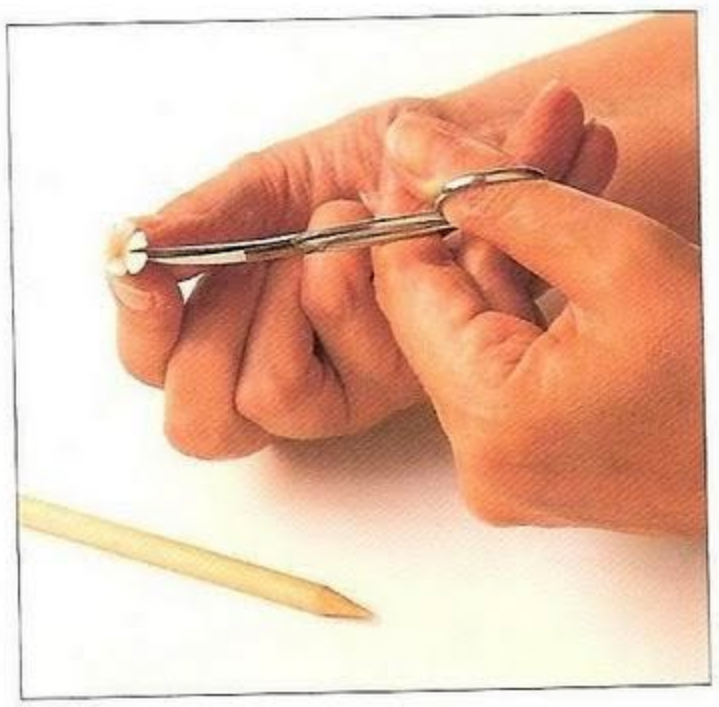
7 Thread a short length of 28- or 30-gauge green wire through the throat of the flower until the tip of the wire sits in the soft paste at the back of the flower. Gently roll this paste on to the wire to secure. Allow the flowers to dry and harden overnight before dusting to the required finish, using a soft flat brush. See Expert Advice for colour ideas.

8 Tape jasmine flowers and buds (page 105) together in natural sprays using ½-width green florists' tape.



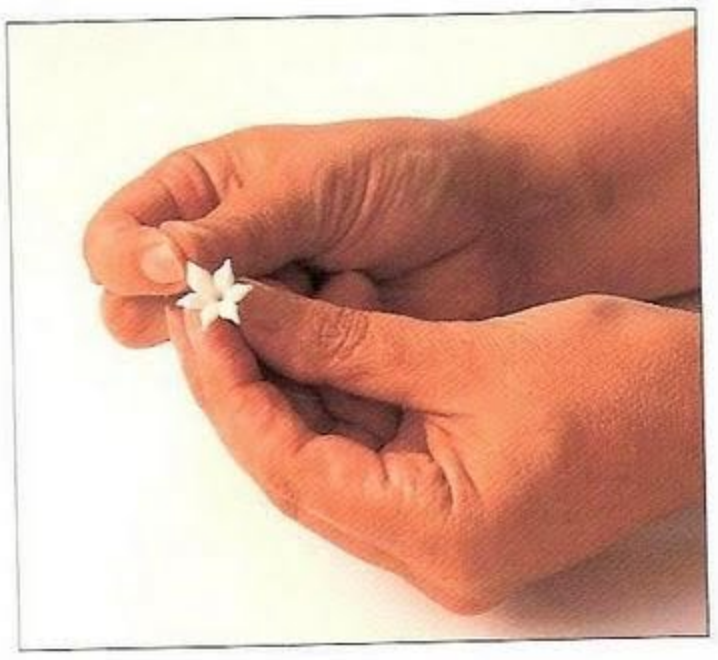
Freesia

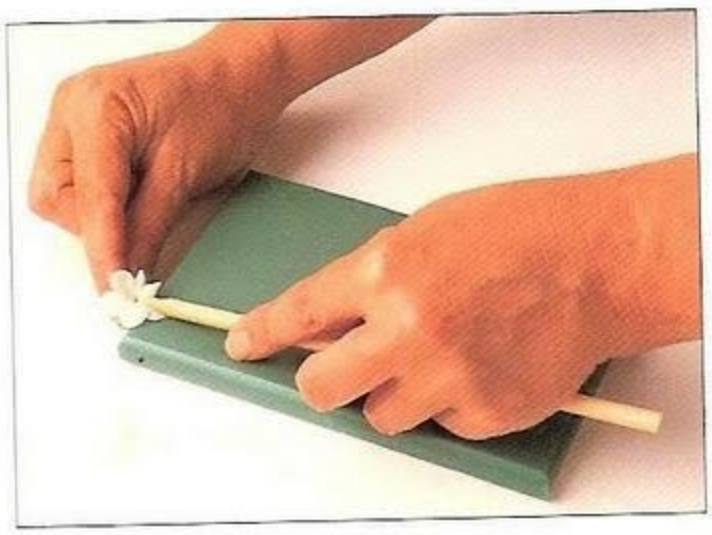
1 Prepare the wires first. Tape six fine stamens to the tip of each green wire, using ¼-width green florists' tape. Make the assembly as smooth as possible.



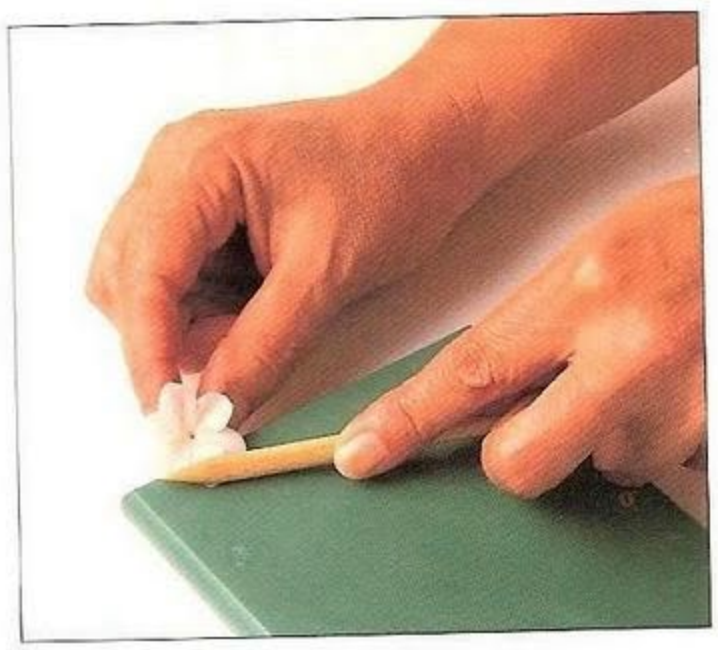
2 Take a small piece of paste and roll it into a smooth ball, then model to a teardrop shape. Dip the pointed end of a dowel into white fat (shortening) and rub into the wood. Push the pointed end of the dowel into the large end of the teardrop, smoothing the tail of the teardrop into a slender point. Cut six slits in the large end of the paste, either with a scalpel or scissors (as for Jasmine, page 86).

3 Pinch the cut edges of a petal inwards, and then squash the petal flat, pinching the outer edge to give a slight point. Repeat for all six petals.





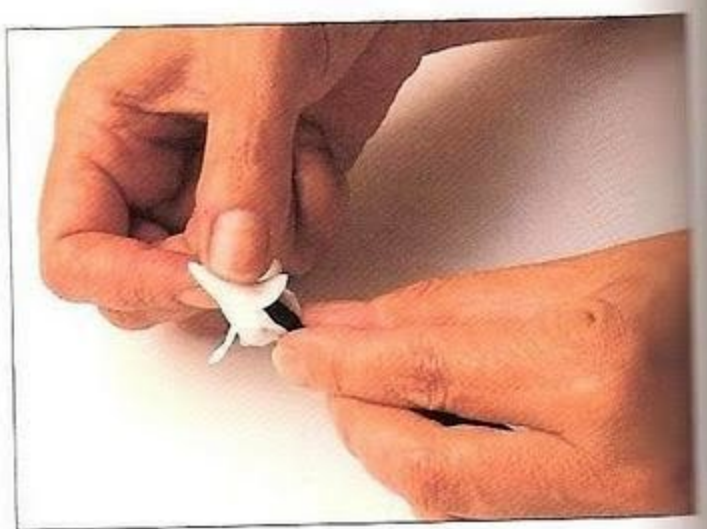
4 Use the dowel to roll the petals thinly, using the edge of a non-stick board as support. Roll the petals first from the centre out to each side.



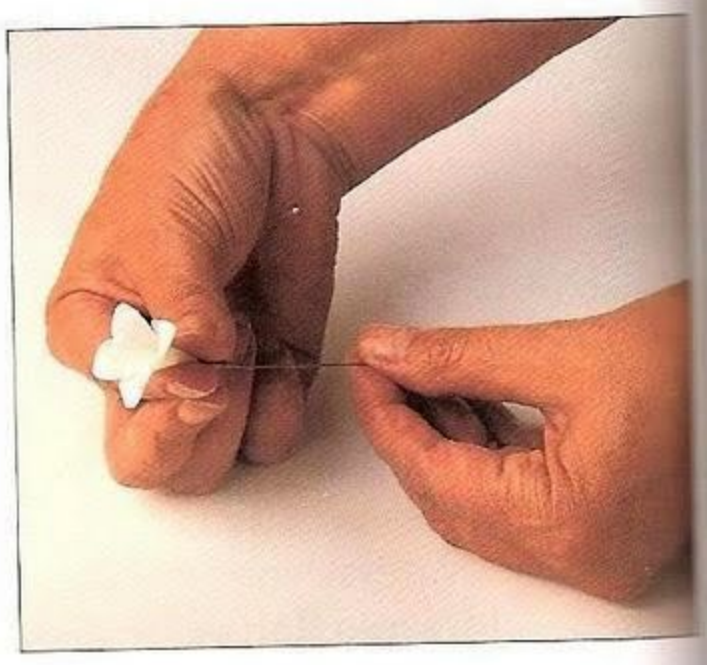
5 Finish by rolling out towards the edge of the petal to accentuate the pointed lip. Use the shoulder of the dowel point to cup the petal.

EXPERT ADVICE

A bunch of fresh flowers to copy is a great help when modelling sugar flowers.

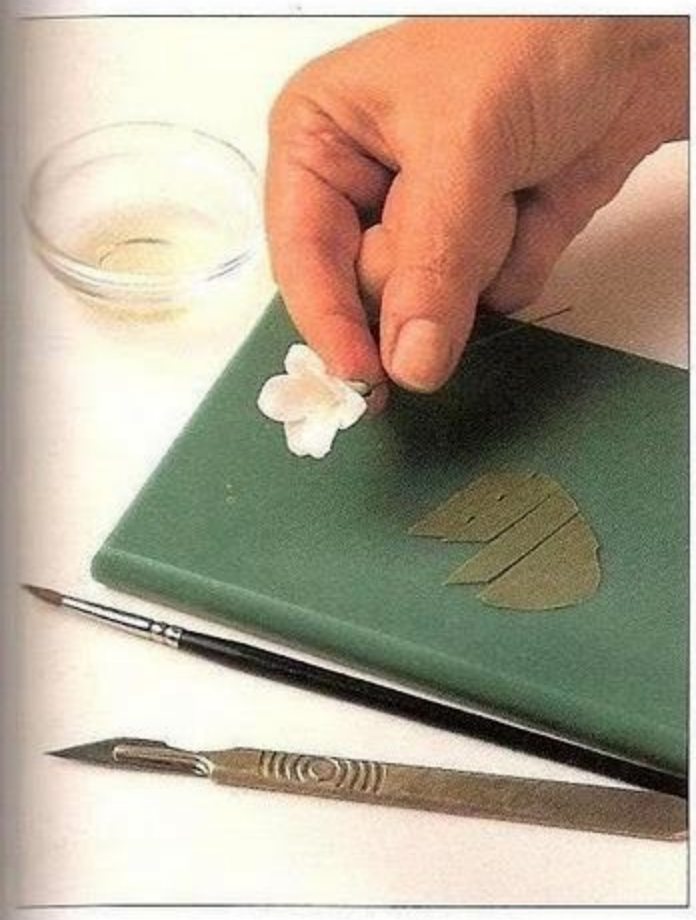


6 Place the flower on a throat modelling tool and push three alternate petals up and the other three down. Take two of the petals going upwards and lay the one pointing downwards between them, up over the top. Press firmly to join, and repeat with the rest of the petals. Remove from the modelling tool and moisten the centre of the flower with glue.

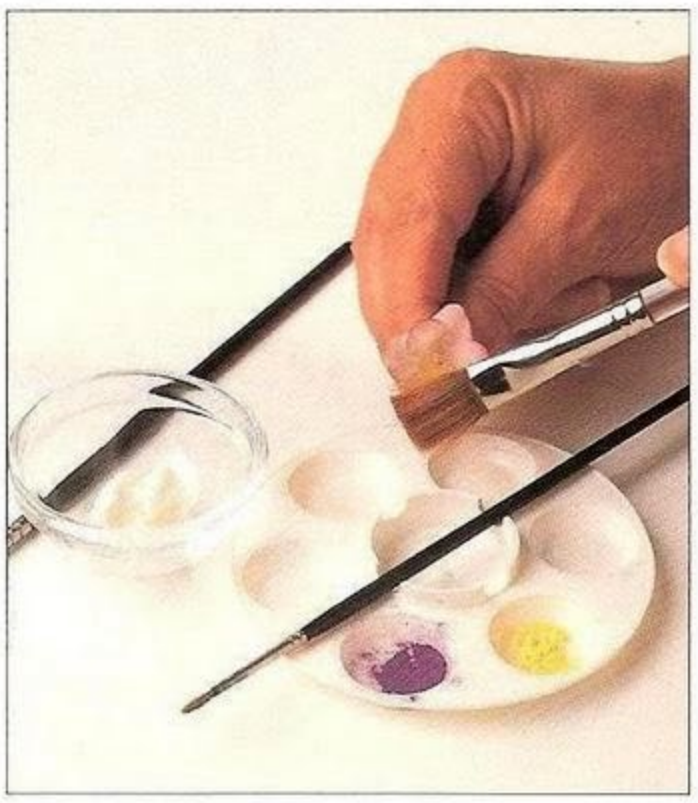


7 Gently feed a prepared wire through the throat of the flower, rolling the base well to bed on to the wire. Finally, shape the throat to the desired finish and shape the tips of the petals into a natural arrangement.

8 Make some more flowers, slightly less open, and some buds. The buds are elongated teardrops, made in green paste. Make the smallest buds first on to straight 28-gauge wires. As you make larger buds, add a little white paste to the green to lighten the colour. The largest buds should be marked across the top with three lines made with a veiner tool or scalpel (page 105).



9 The calyx for each flower is a tiny diamond of green paste. Glue the calyx, pick up with the wire, push up and press gently around the base of the flower, allowing the two long points to stand proud.

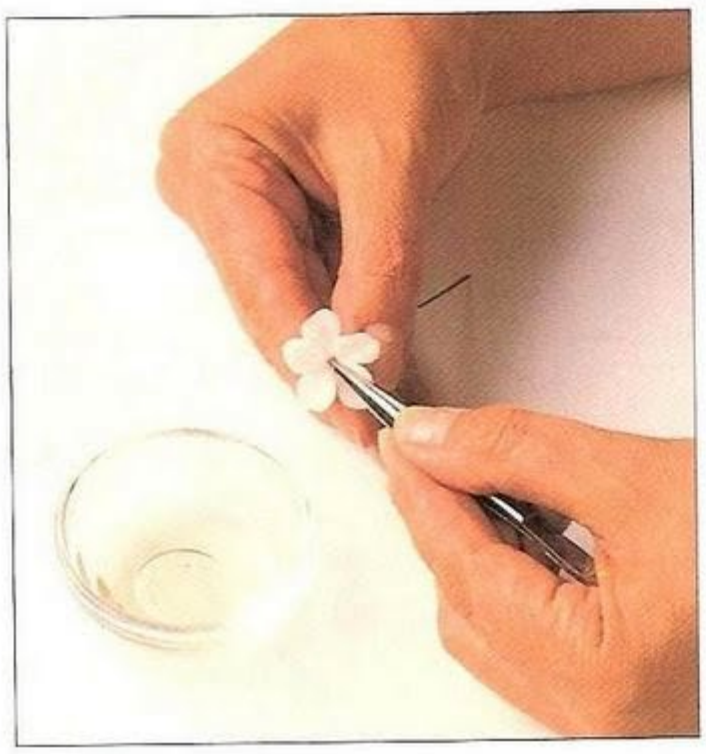


10 Allow the flowers to dry and harden overnight before dusting to the required colour. Freesias have a white throat and coloured petals. If you are new to dusting, rub a little white vegetable fat or paint a little egg white on the inside and outside of the throat. This acts as a barrier when brushing on the coloured powder, leaving the throat white. Use a flat brush to dust the petals the required colour, then use a fine brush to add a little yellow dust to the tips of the stamens and inside the throat.

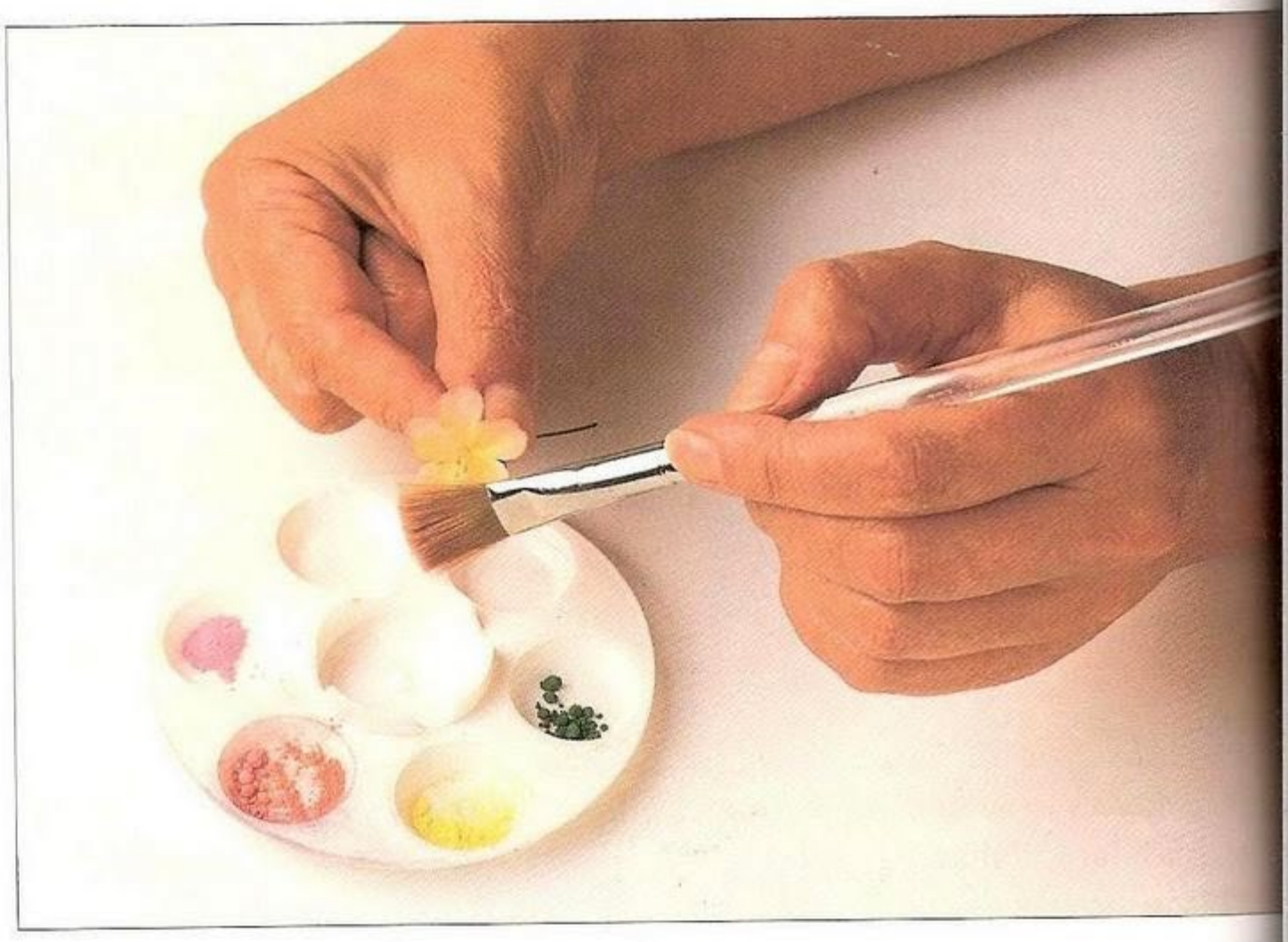
11 Tape the flowers and buds together as shown, then arrange naturally. If you wish to use these flower sprays in a vase, tape in a florists' stub wire (16–18-gauge) to strengthen the stem.

Blossom

1 Roll a small piece of paste into a smooth ball, then model into a teardrop. Dip the pointed end of a dowel rod into white fat (shortening) and rub into the wood. Push the point of the dowel into the wide end of the teardrop, and cut five petals with a scalpel or scissors (as for Jasmine, page 86). Roll each petal from side to side with the dowel on the edge of a non-stick board.



2 Remove the flower from the dowel and arrange the petals in a natural shape. Push on to a 28-gauge wire. Push two or three short stamens, dipped in glue, into the throat of the flower, using tweezers. Make as many flowers as required and allow to dry overnight.



3 Dust the edges of the petals and the throats with colour, using a soft, flat brush.

4 Make some buds (page 105) and tape with the blossoms into a spray.

EXPERT ADVICE

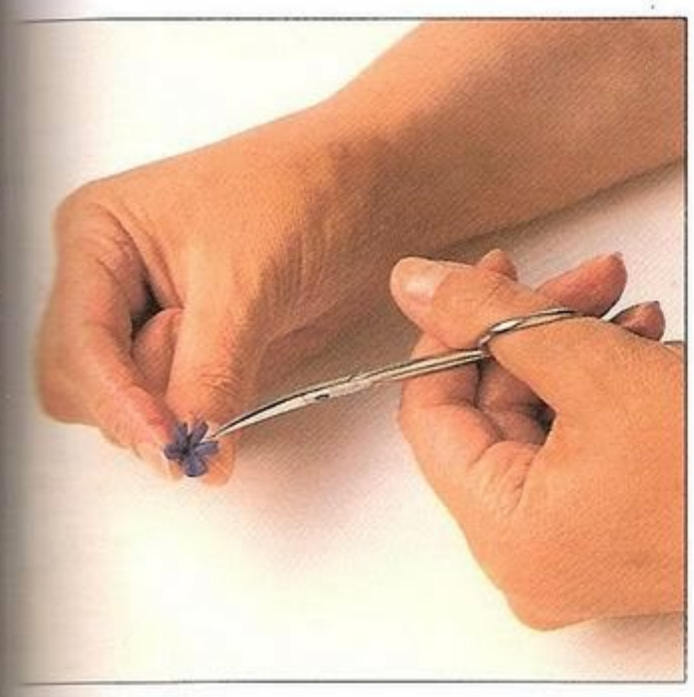
Blossoms and their buds are useful 'filler' flowers, which can be used individually or in sprays to fill gaps in large arrangements. Make more than you need, in white paste, and store the 'spares' in a box until needed. Dust the blossoms the required colour before you use them.

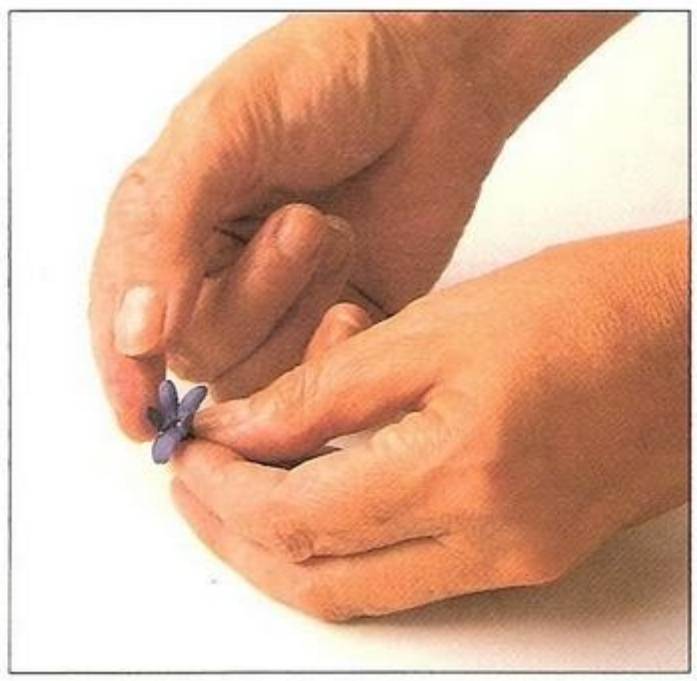
EXPERT ADVICE

These simple flowers are very popular, and look very pretty tied in a bunch with ribbon. Trim the wires to the same length, tie with a ribbon and bow, and place directly on the cake. If possible, choose a ribbon to match the ribbon used to trim the cake board.

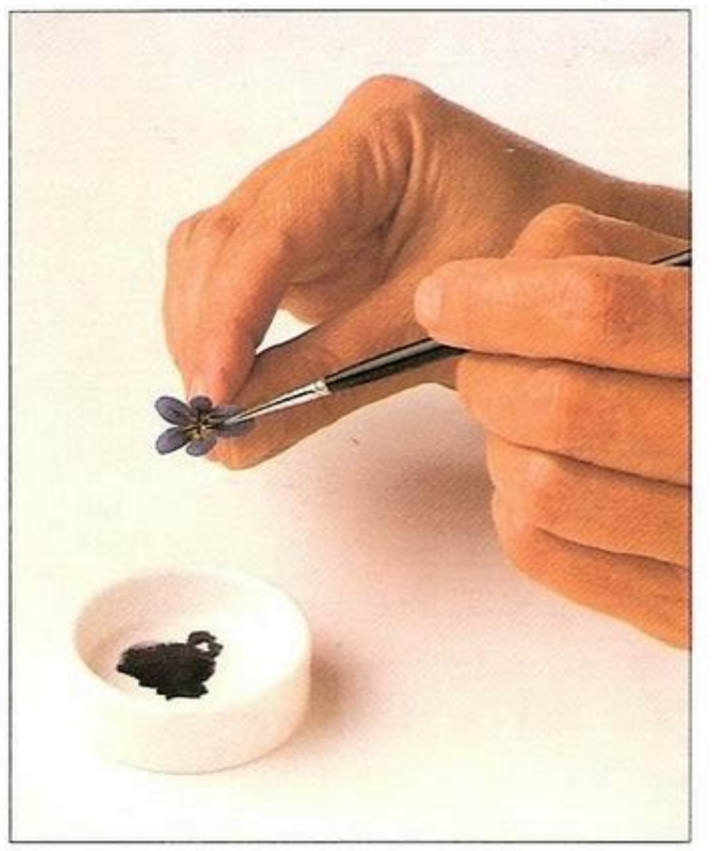
Violet

1 Colour the paste first with violet colouring. Take a small ball of paste, roll smooth and model into a teardrop. Dip the pointed end of a dowel rod into white fat (shortening) and rub into the wood. Push the pointed end of the dowel into the large end of the teardrop, then remove and, using scissors, cut two small (at the top), two medium (one each side), and one large petal (at the bottom) in the opened end of the teardrop.





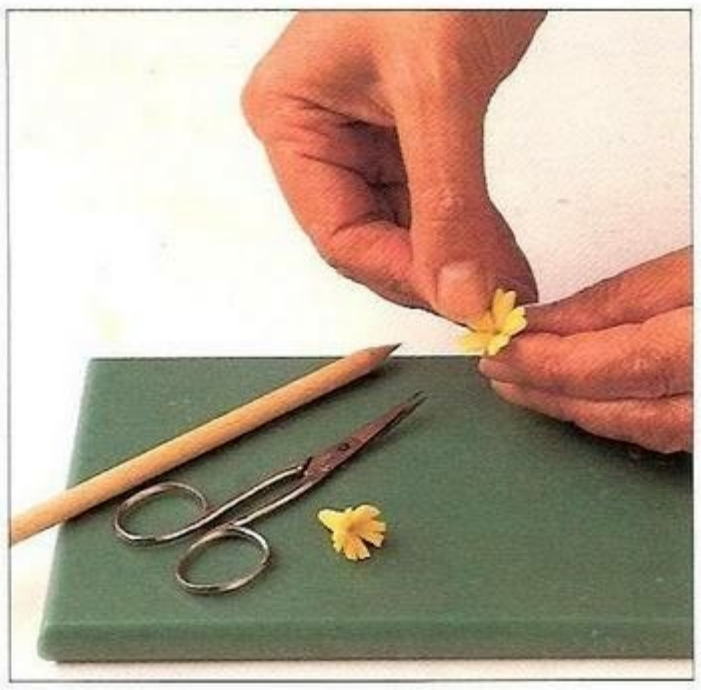
2 Pinch and flatten each petal, easing the top pair and the bottom one backwards slightly, and tweaking the two side petals inwards and upwards. Allow the flowers to dry and harden overnight.



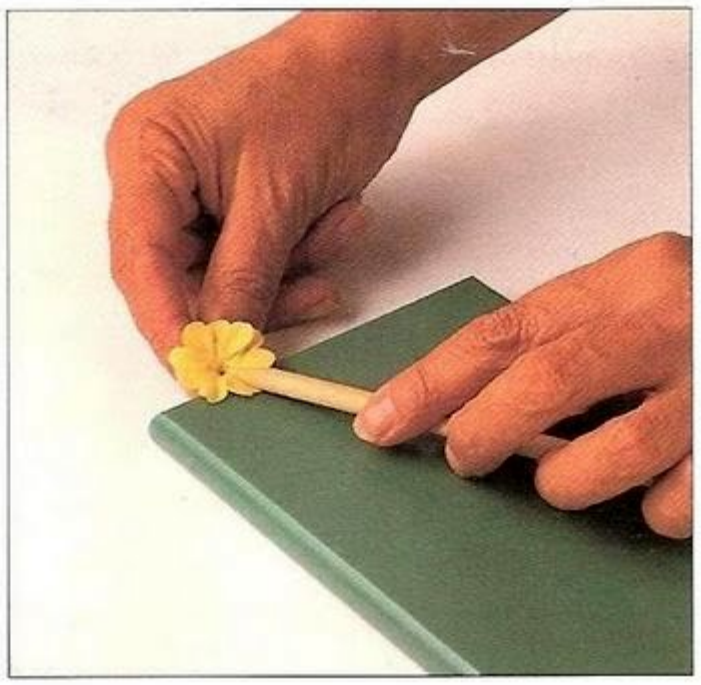
3 Dust the centre of the flower with yellow, and then paint lines with a fine brush and black colouring mixed with alcohol.

4 Arrange the flowers, and buds if required (page 105), in a spray, and tie with a ribbon, if wished.

Primrose

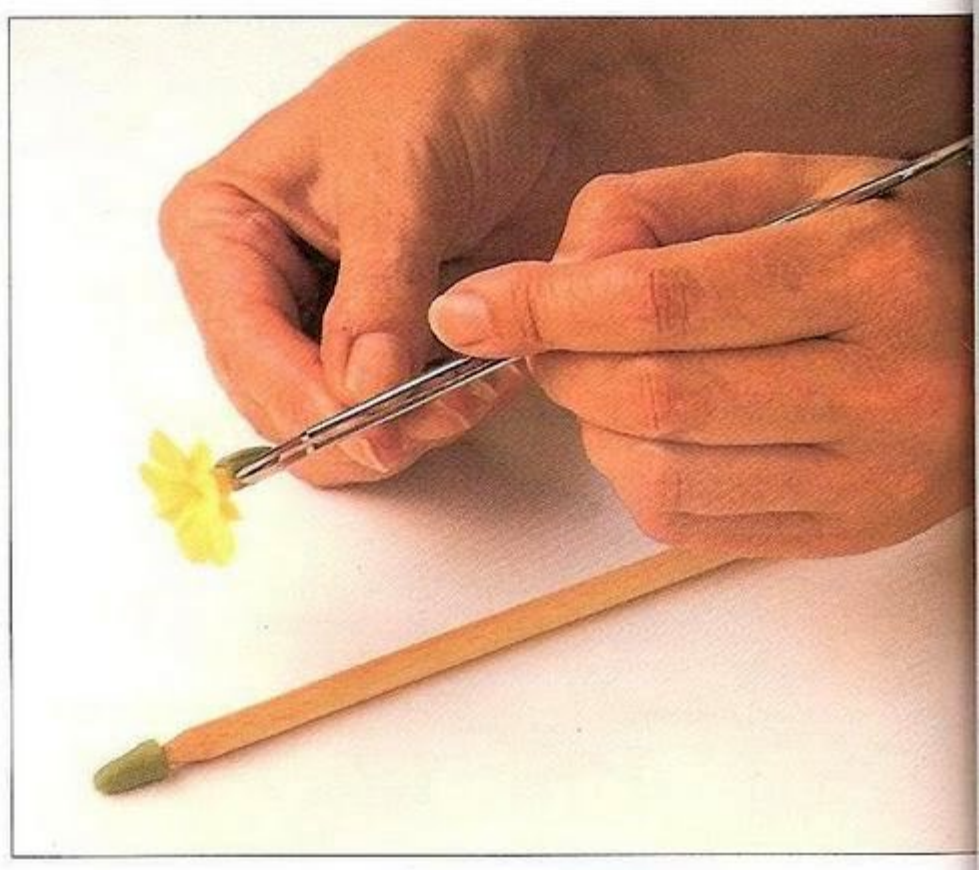


1 Start a primrose with yellow flower paste. Shape and cut as for blossom (step 1, page 90). With a scalpel or scissors, make a shorter cut halfway between each of the five cuts already made. Pinch each petal lightly, then flatten.



2 Roll the petals with the dowel on the edge of a non-stick board, ensuring that each petal has a heart shape. Push the flower on to a 28-gauge wire and roll the back to secure.

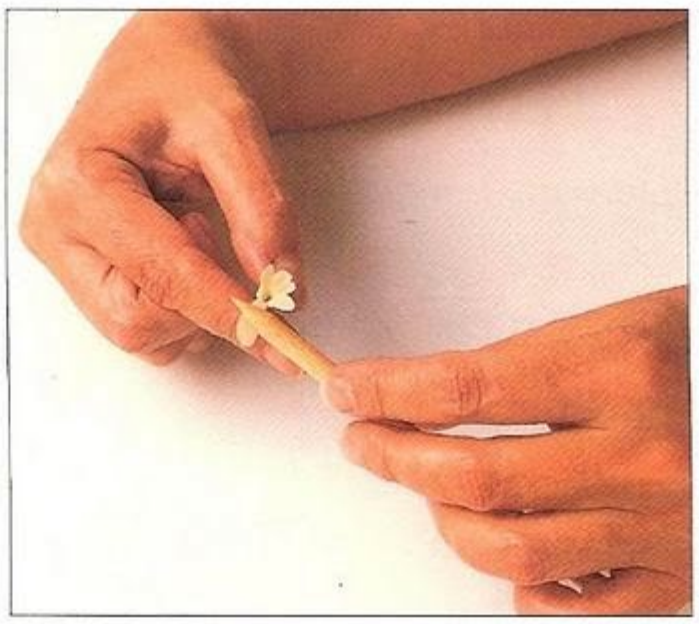
3 Make the calyx for the primrose with a very small ball of green paste, rolled into a teardrop and then pushed on to the dowel. Remove from the dowel, paint a little glue into the hole and push on to the wire, fitting it over the back of the flower. Pinch five protrusions lengthways in the green paste with cranked tweezers. Allow the flowers to dry and harden overnight. Dust the centres of the flowers with green colour.



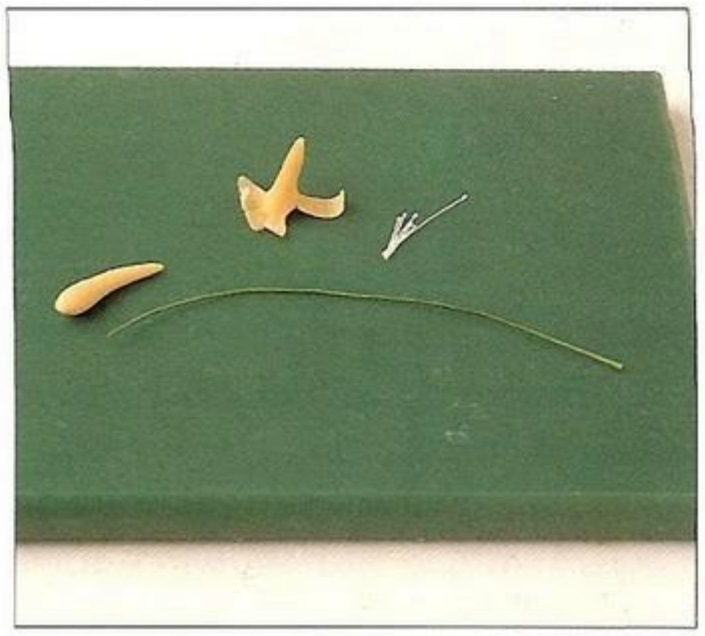
4 Make buds (page 105) and wire into a spray with the flowers. Leaves can be added (page 102).

Honeysuckle

1 Roll a tiny piece of paste (half the size used for jasmine) to a smooth ball, and then model into a long, slender teardrop. Place the wide end on a satay stick or cocktail stick (toothpick) and, with a scalpel or scissors, make the first two cuts, producing one petal consisting of a quarter of the paste. Cut away two triangles, one from the base of each of these cuts, to finish with a second petal that is thicker but the same width as the first. Cut three slits into this second petal, half the length of the first slits, to produce what looks like a little hand.



2 Using a dowel rod, roll the long, single petal over the top knuckle of your forefinger to flatten and lengthen the petal.

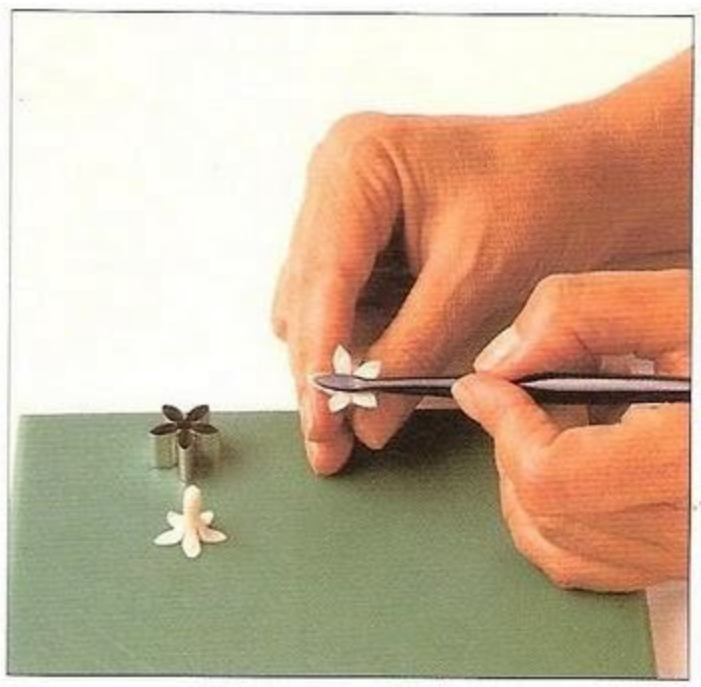


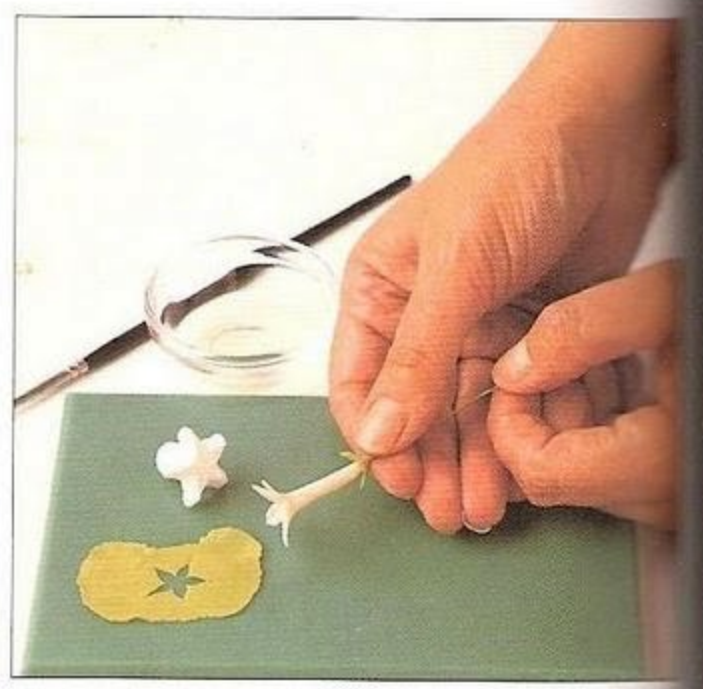
3 Thin the four smaller petals, after pinching and flattening each, with the dowel rod, rolling lightly across them. Turn the flower over and curl the petals back, rolling inwards with a cocktail stick. Push on a 28-gauge wire and smooth the back of the flower, pressing lightly to give a slight curve. Cut six fine stamens, one longer than the other five, trim, dip in egg white or glue and, holding them with tweezers, push them into the throat of the flower. Make buds and push on to curved wires. Allow the flowers to dry and harden overnight before dusting to the required finish.

4 Wire the flowers and buds together in natural sprays, adding leaves as required (page 102).

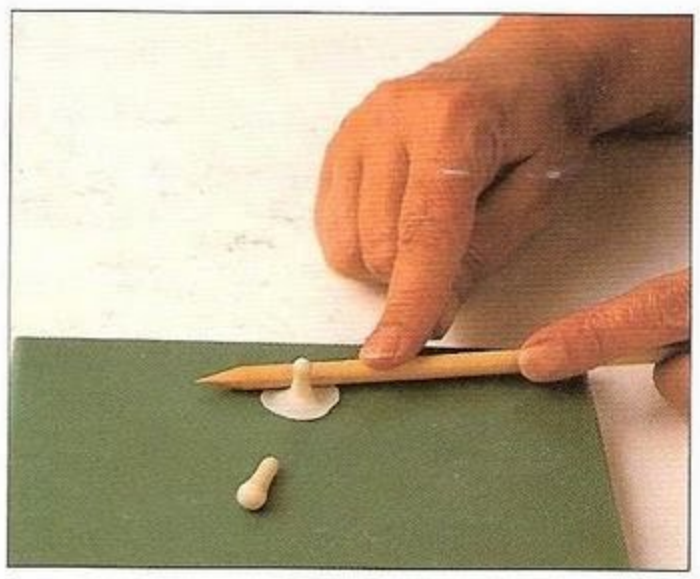
CUTTER FLOWERS

There are hundreds of flower cutters available commercially. Once you have mastered the basic techniques involved in handling the paste for use with cutters, and building the flowers with or without wires, then you are well armed to handle any cutter. Cutter flowers may be made in one whole piece of paste, or from individual petals, or each petal can be wired on a 32- or 33-gauge wire and taped together when all the components are dry.





Stephanotis



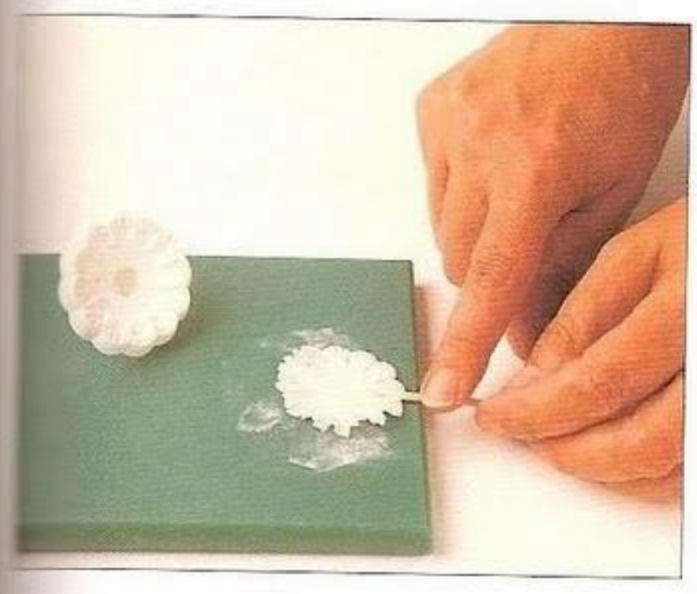
1 This flower is made from one piece of paste. Roll a small piece of paste into a smooth ball, and then into a dumb-bell shape with one end slightly larger than the other. Hold the dumb-bell shape upright and squash the larger end down on to a non-stick board to flatten. Using thumb and forefinger, flatten this area until it is large enough to roll into a circle with a dowel.

2 Drop a stephanotis cutter over the top of the dumb-bell shape, and cut out the shape from the flattened circle. Smooth the edges on the back of each petal with a small ball-shaped modelling tool. Turn the flower over and mark or thin the centre of each petal with a dresden tool, cocktail stick (toothpick) or the back of a small pointed knife. You may need to do this over the knuckle of your forefinger. Push the flower on to a 26-gauge wire, ensuring the dumb-bell shape is retained and, if possible, elongated.

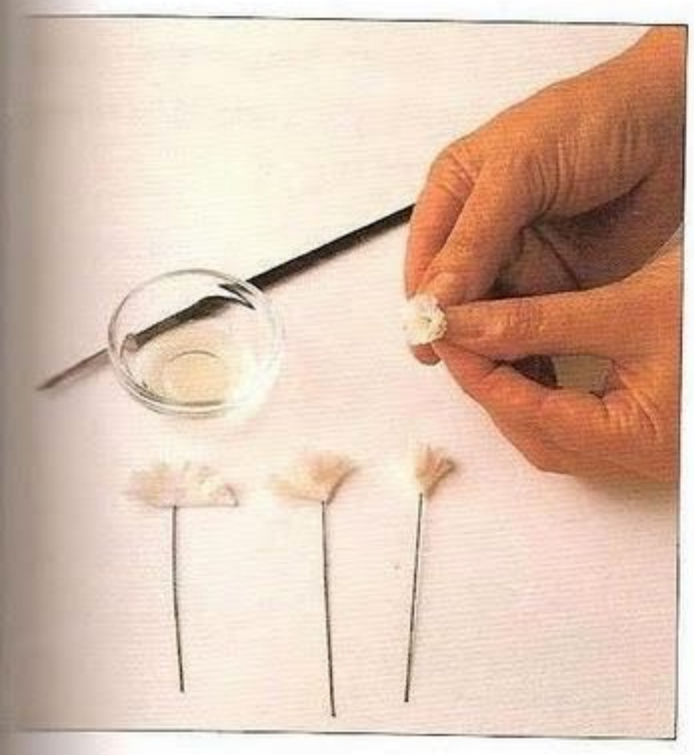
3 Cut a very small calyx from green paste with a calyx cutter. Add a touch of glue and feed up the wire on to the base of the flower.

4 Arrange the flowers, with buds if desired (page 105), into small sprays. These flowers can be used in mixed flower sprays, wired in individually.

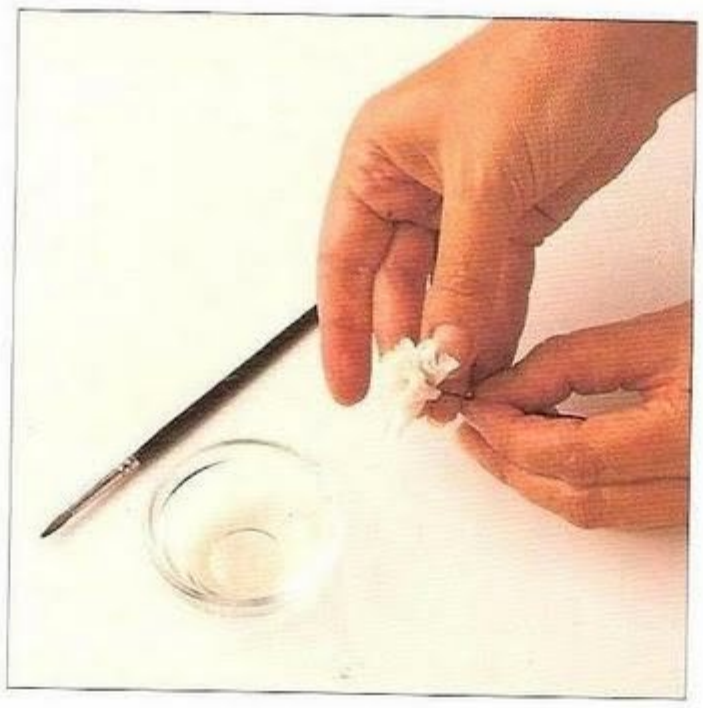
Carnation



1 Prepare a 24-gauge wire by bending a hook in one end. Take a tiny piece of paste and wrap it around the hook. Leave to dry. Roll out some paste quite thinly and place on a non-stick board dusted with a little cornflour. Cut the paste with a carnation cutter. Frill the cut edges of the paste with a cocktail stick (toothpick).



2 Paint a little glue on the flat central area of the circle, push the wire through the centre point and fold the circle in half around the wire. Paint glue on the right-hand third of the half circle and fold in. Turn the flower over and repeat. Pick the flower up, squeeze the unfrilled paste together quite firmly, and roll on to the wire. Leave to dry.

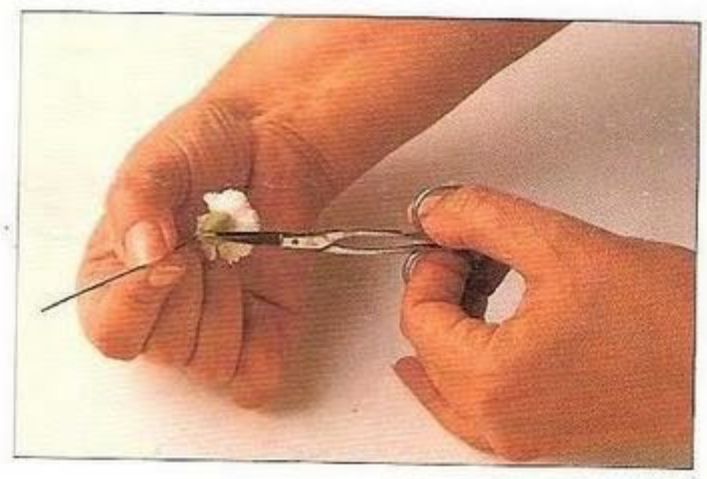


3 Cut another thin piece of paste with the carnation cutter, and frill as in step 1. Glue the paste in the middle of the circle and fold in half. Glue one side of the semi-circle remaining, and wrap around the centre of the dried flower. Smooth the join down with fingertips or a cocktail stick. Leave to dry.

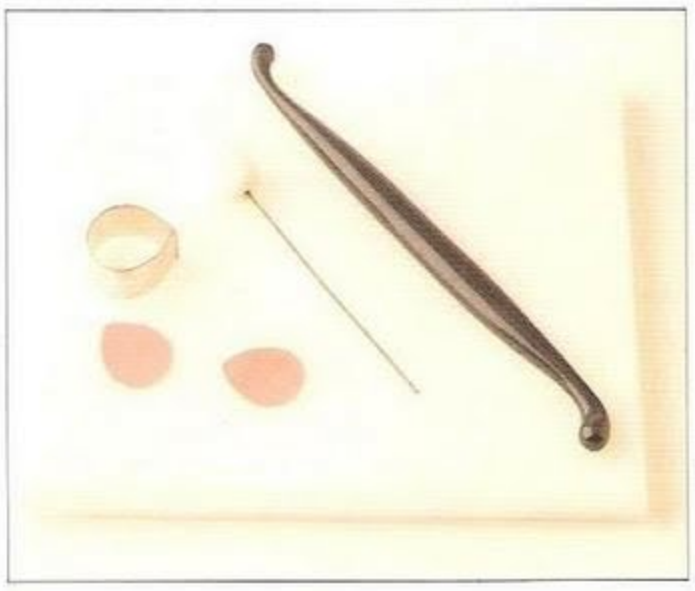
4 Make the calyx with a small ball of green paste modelled to a teardrop. Place the rounded end on to a dowel and cut five shallow points with a scalpel or scissors. Roll the paste, still on the dowel, on a

textured surface, e.g. a piece of dried corn leaf. Remove the paste from the dowel, paint a little glue in the hole, and feed up the wire, pushing neatly around the base of the flower.

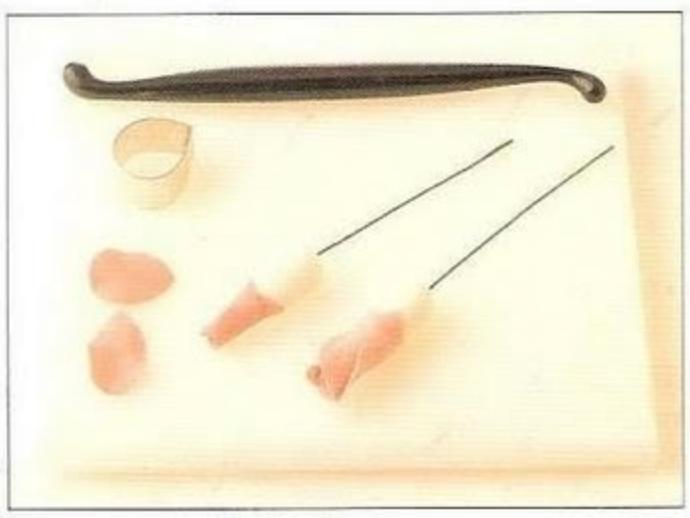
5 With the scissors, make five fine snips into the paste as shown (below). Dust the flowers as desired and arrange into sprays, posies or natural arrangements.



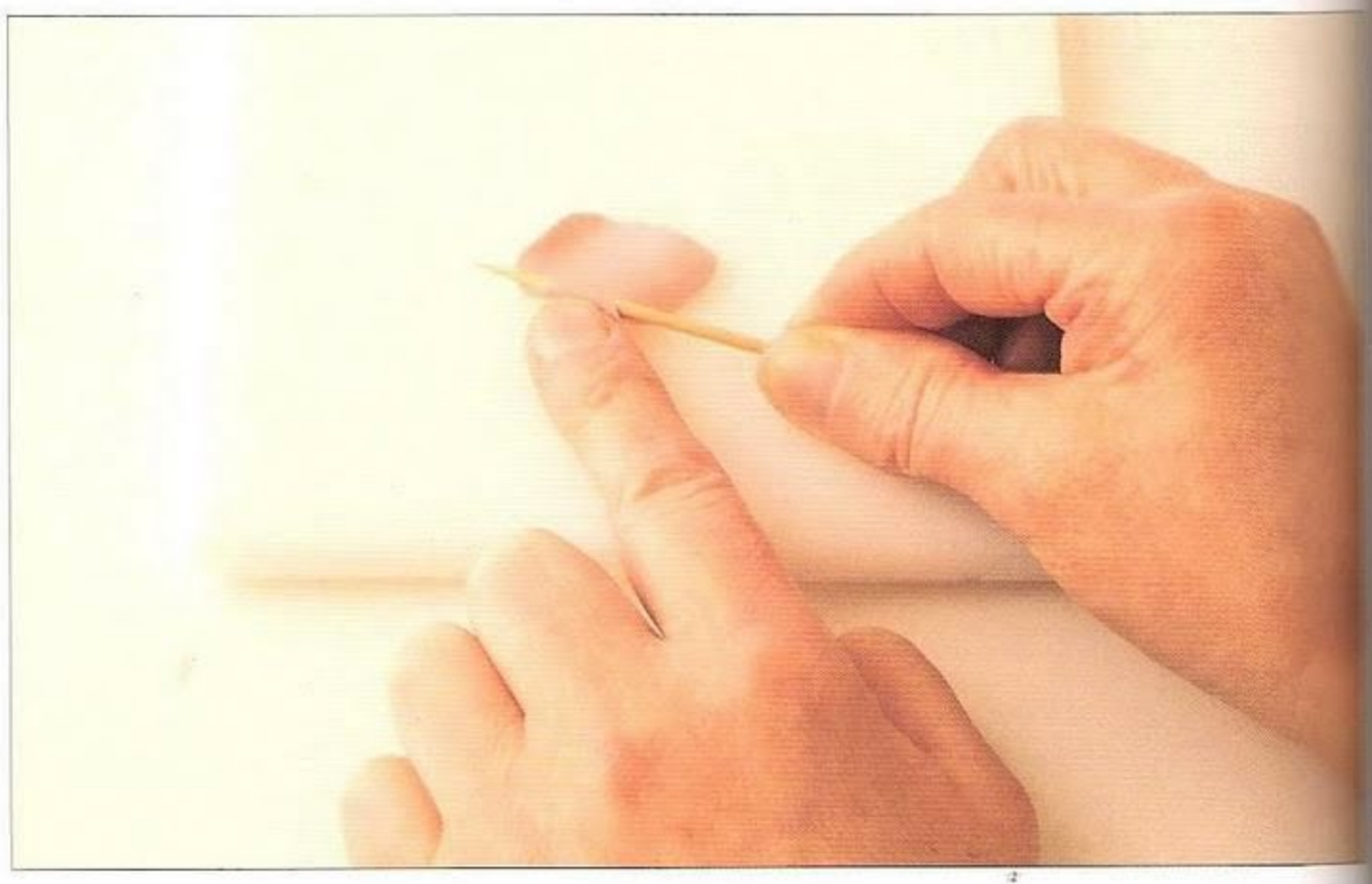
Rose



1 Make central cones of paste on hooked 24-gauge wires. The cones should fit inside the petal cutter you have chosen. Leave to dry. Cut one petal and soften the edges with a ball tool. Paint the surface of the petal with glue and wrap it tightly around the cone so that the cone cannot be seen down through the top of the rolled petal. Leave to dry. Cut a second petal, soften the edges, and glue the bottom half. Wrap this around the first petal, opening the top edge slightly.

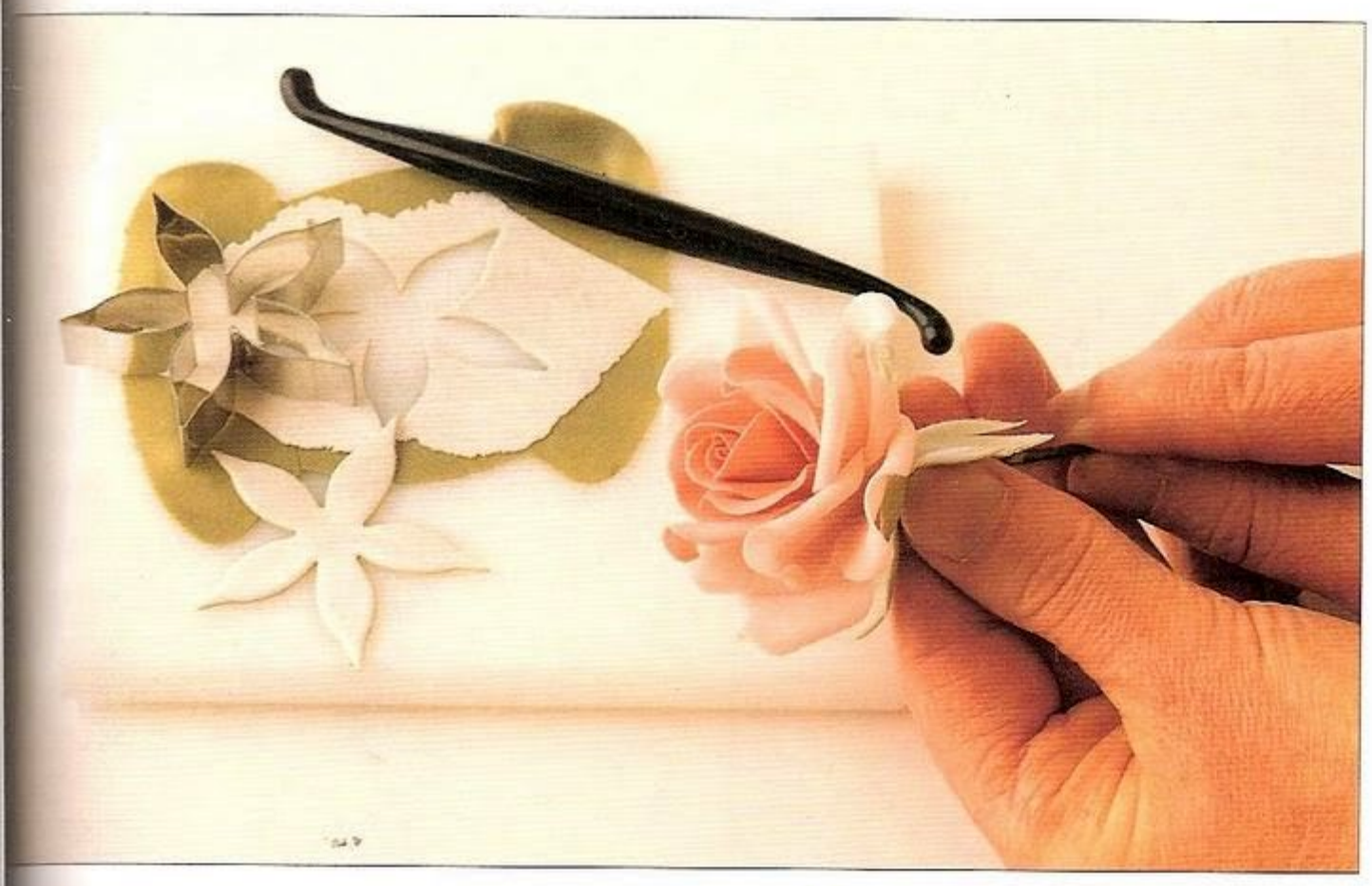


2 Cut two more petals, and add to the rose in the same way as the second petal, this time adding the two petals at the same time, overlapping the edges. Cut three petals, and repeat the process, this time adding all three at the same time. Open up the top edges of the petals and very gently curl them back slightly with your fingertips.



3 The rose will now have grown in size. Select a rose petal cutter one size larger than the one you started with, and cut four or five petals. Soften the edges with a ball tool and cup the centres, then turn the petals over and soften the edges again with the ball tool. Use a cocktail stick (toothpick) to curl back the edges of each petal from the sides of the top edge. Leave to become leathery (about 10 minutes) before gluing the bottom third of each petal, and then adding to the flower.

4 Add further shaping to the petals with your fingertips, then dust the roses with powder colour and steam (page 85).



5 Make the calyx from green and cream paste, both colours rolled out very thinly. Lay the cream on top of the green and cut out a calyx with a cutter. Cut small snips down the sides of each sepal of the calyx, then soften all edges with a ball tool, working on the green side. Turn the calyx over, cup the centre and glue. Push up the wire and gently press on to the back of the flower. Take a small pea of green paste, glue and push up to the back of the calyx. Smooth neatly into position.

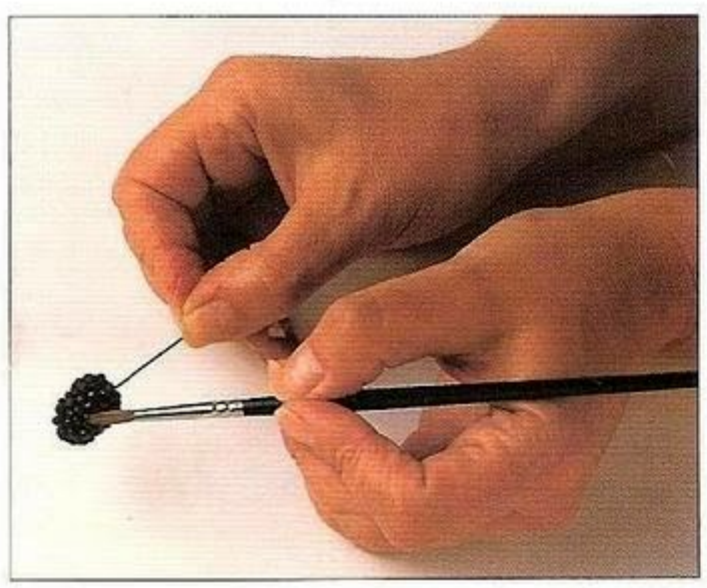
6 Tape the wires with ½-width tape, two or three times, to make the stems more realistic in thickness. Make leaves (page 102) and rosebuds (which start the same way as the flowers but without the open and curled petals added) and wire into a natural arrangement. Roses can be wired individually into mixed flower sprays as well.

Blackberry

The blackberry uses many different modelling techniques. You can include blossom, fruit, buds and leaves in a spray of blackberry, not forgetting a sugar ladybird to add interest.

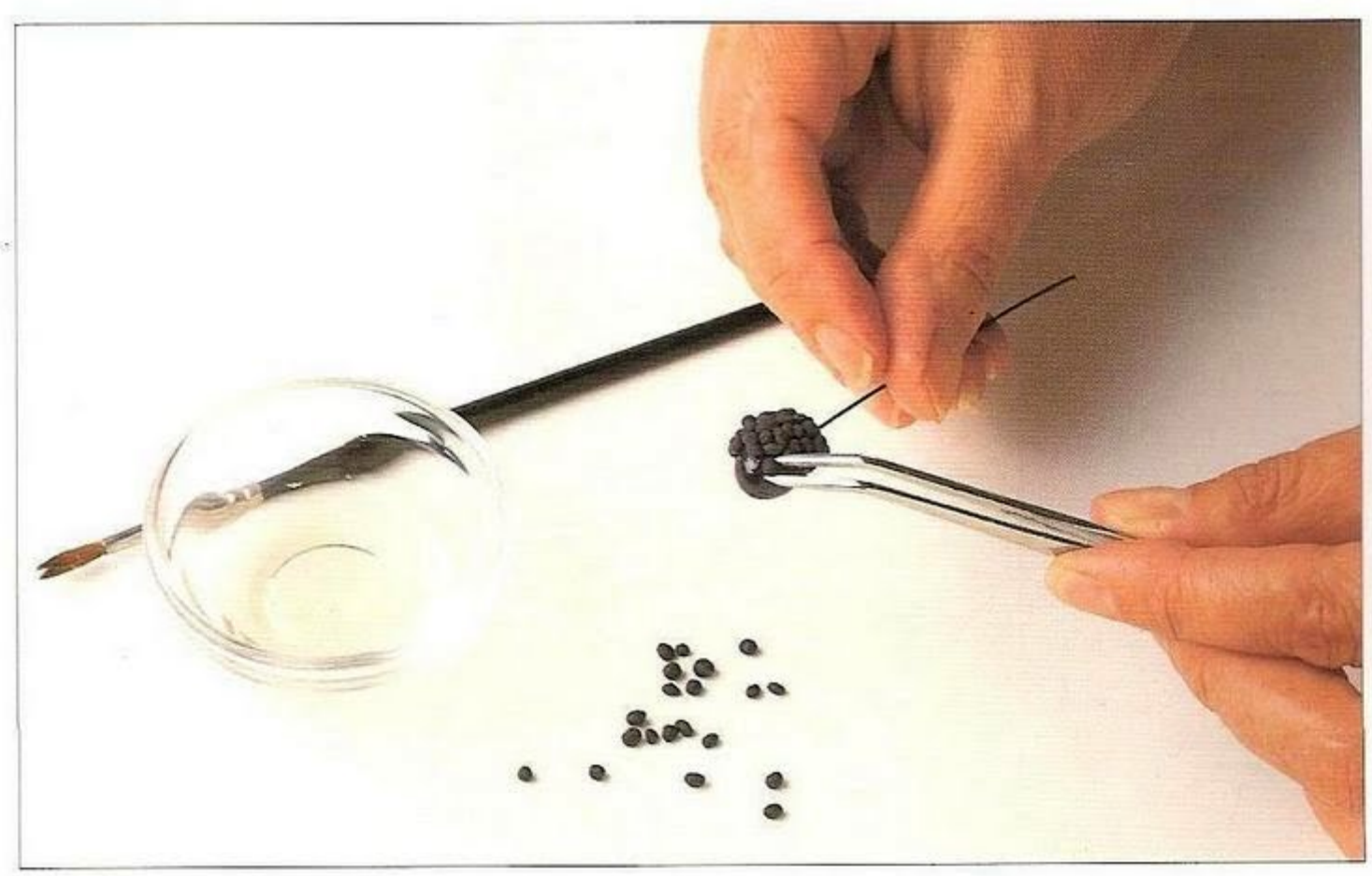
1 Start by making balls of paste (purple for ripe fruit; green for unripe) approximately three-quarters the size required for the finished berries. Push on to hooked 24-gauge wires. Leave these to dry and harden well.

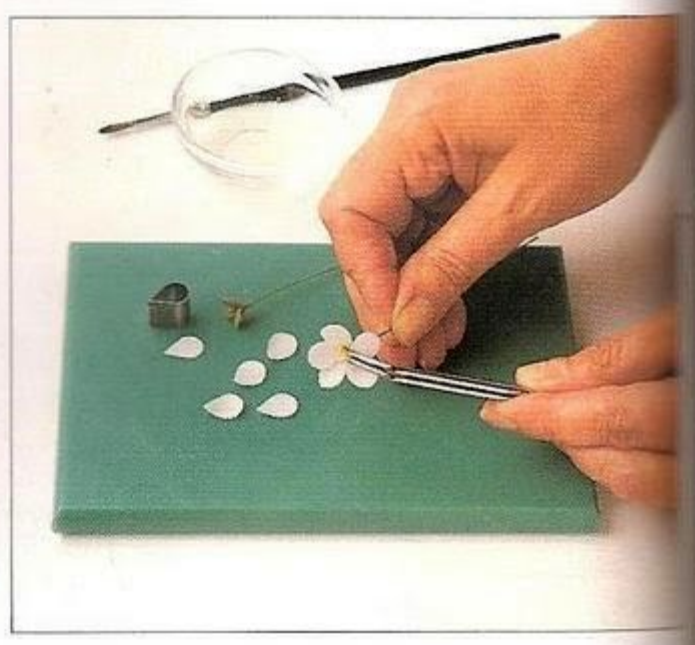
2 Make tiny balls of paste, coloured as shown, approximately 20 at a time, and glue on to the hardened paste, positioning with tweezers. Use light pressure with fingertips to push into the correct position, flattening the tiny balls slightly.



3 When dry, glaze the berries with neat confectioners' varnish painted on with a brush. Only a thin coat is required. Leave to dry.

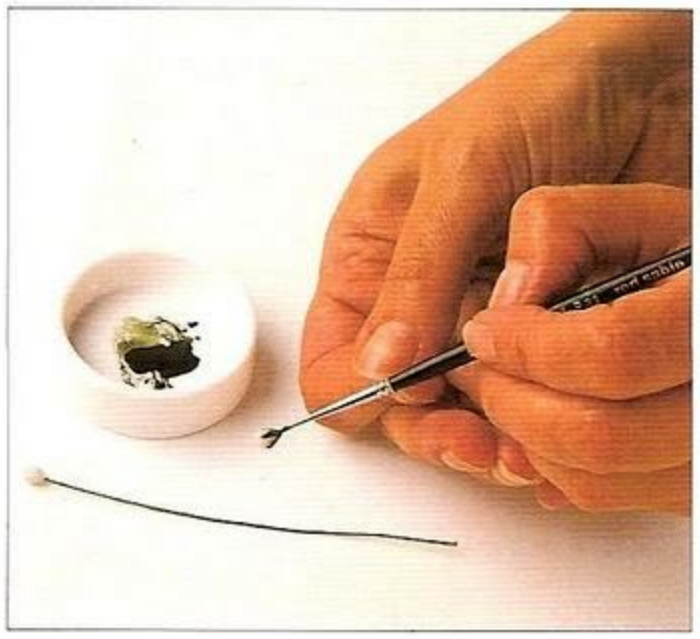
4 To make a blossom, first model a calyx of green paste, following the instructions for the jasmine flower (page 86), but making the calyx much smaller. Wire on to a 26-gauge wire and leave to dry.



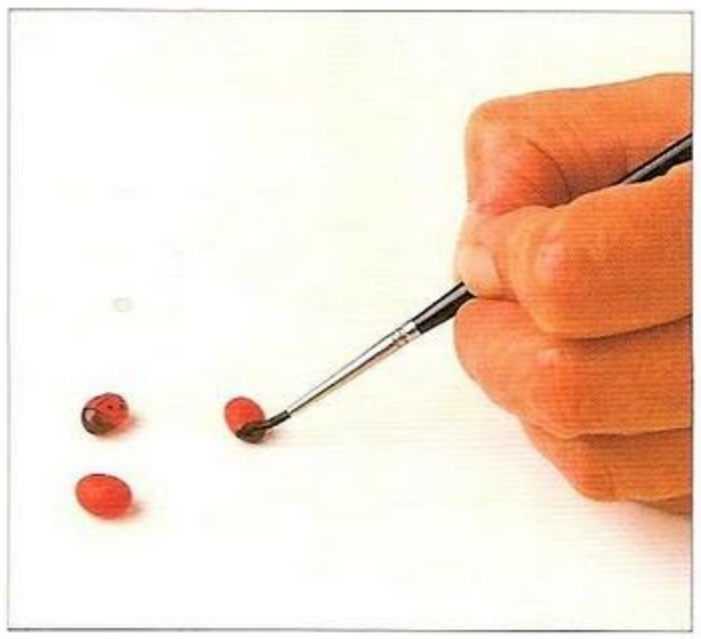


5 Cut individual tiny rose petals (five for each blossom). Soften the

edges with a ball tool and cup the centres, then turn the petals over and soften the edges again with the ball tool. Paint glue on the calyx and attach the petals, overlapping each one and tucking the final petal under the first. Paint the centre of the flower lightly with glue, and push a small bundle of cut yellow stamens into the centre, using tweezers. Leave to dry.

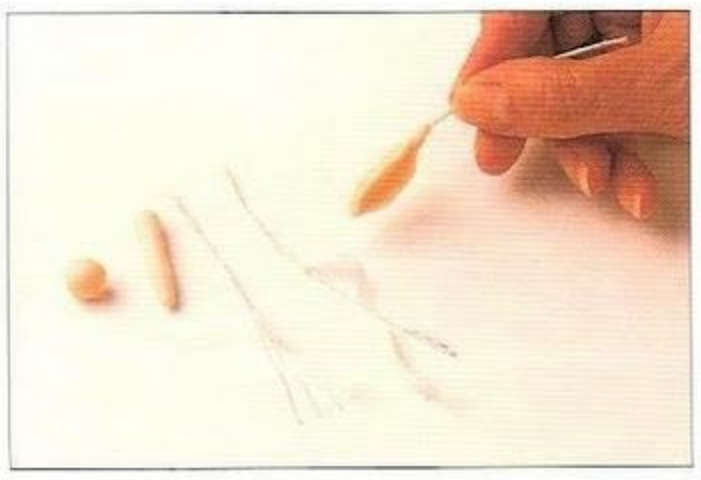


6 Buds are made from small round balls of paste on 30-gauge wires. The tiny calyxes are painted on with a fine brush and green colouring.



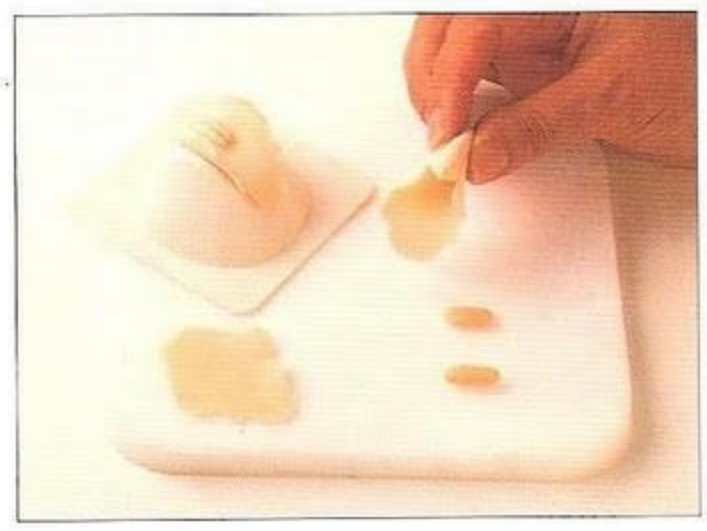
7 Make leaves of various sizes with rose leaf cutters and veiners (page 102). Wire blossoms, berries, buds and leaves together in a natural arrangement. A sugar ladybird adds interest to the spray: mould a ball of red paste, flatten slightly and leave to dry, then paint with black food colouring. Leave to dry, then fix in position on a blackberry leaf with a little glue.

Orchid



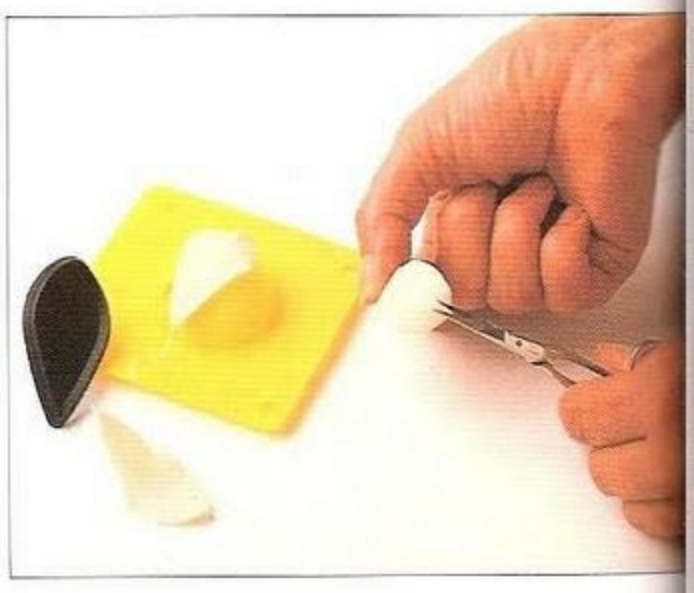
1 This flower will be much easier to make if you have a real one to copy. Start with a large ball of paste modelled into a sausage that is thicker at one end. Push this on to four 32-gauge white wires which have been twisted tightly together and taped with ¼-width white florists' tape. (The twisting of the wire will give strength to this heavy flower.)

Run a scriber down one side of the sausage. Ensure that the top of the sausage remains round and smooth as you squeeze and flatten the sides of the tool-marked area outwards. When you are satisfied with the shape, bend the sausage with the wire inside to give a gentle curve. Pinch a small ball shape into the tip of the sausage, and squeeze the paste neatly around the wire at the other end. Leave to dry.



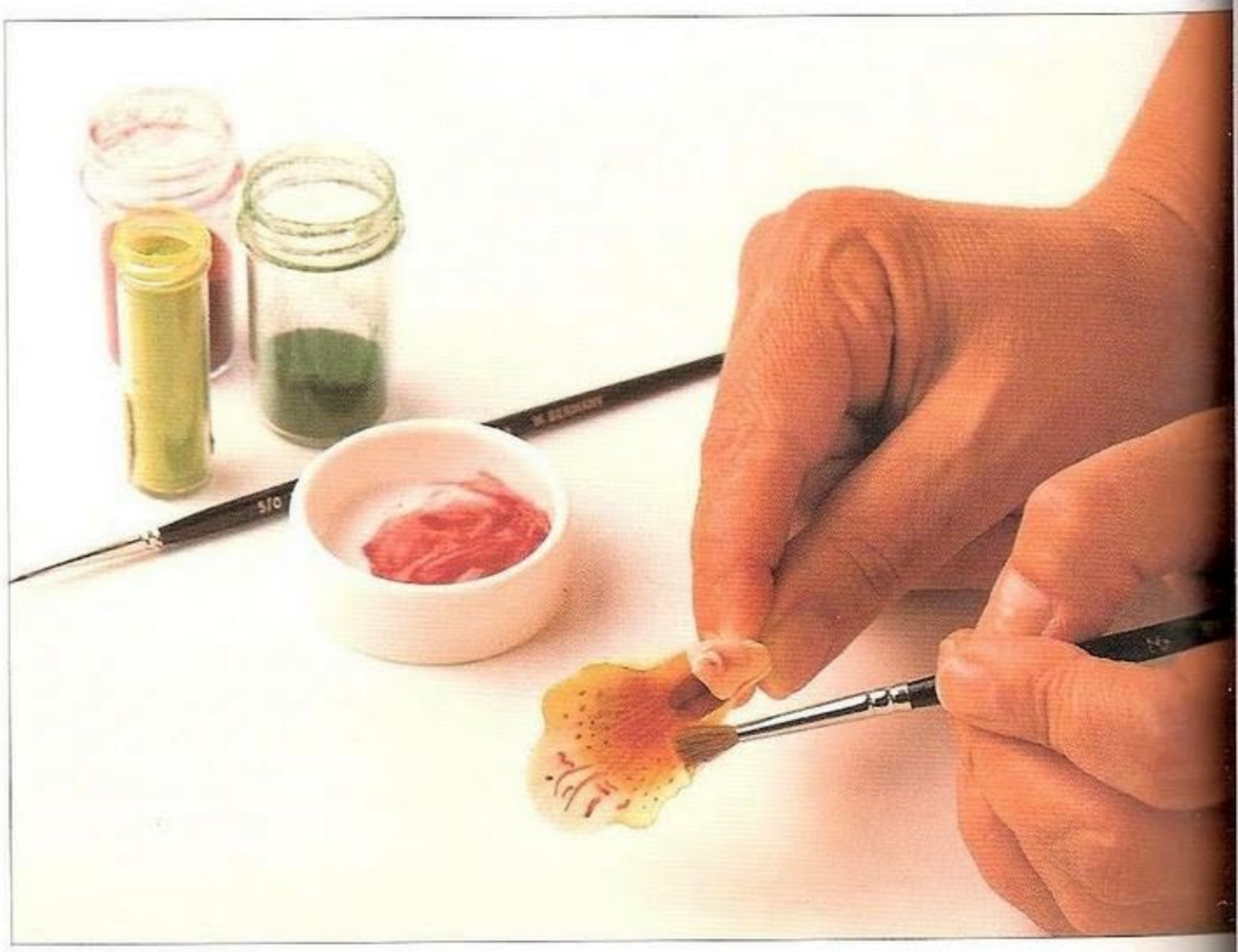
2 This particular orchid is quite fleshy so do not roll out the paste too thinly from now on. Roll out the paste and cut the throat shape with an orchid throat cutter. Vein with a veining tool or soft throat veiner. Soften the furled edges of the throat with a ball tool or flat scriber, and lightly thin the sides of the throat. Place in a throat former to become leathery but not hard. Make the fleshy stamens from a tiny sausage of paste, scored down the middle with a scalpel and flattened when glued into position on the throat. After about 10 minutes, glue the throat to the flower centre, hold for a few moments with your fingertips and then rest back in the throat former until hard.

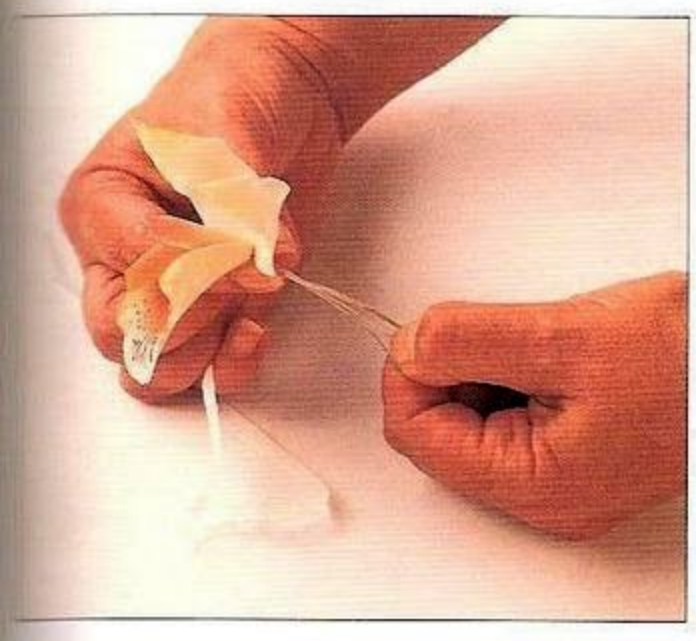
3 Cut five petals, two with pointed tips and three with rounded edges, using orchid petal cutters. When rolling out the paste, leave a small ridge of thicker paste that will run down the centre of each petal to receive a 32-gauge wire (page 102). Soften the edges of the petals, and vein with a veining tool or veining pad. Carefully insert the 32-gauge



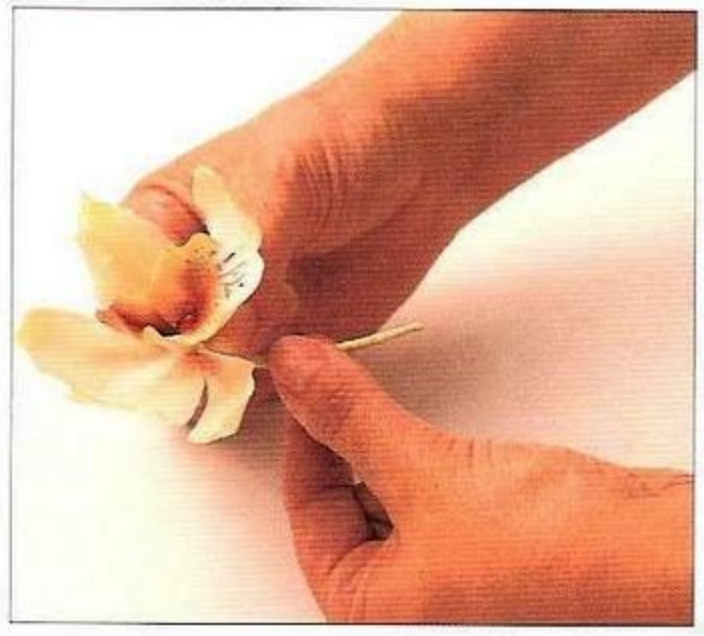
wires, two-thirds the length of each petal. Cup each petal over the pad of your thumb. To further cup the round-edged petals, paint a little glue in the centre of the top edge and pinch the paste together quite firmly. Turn each petal over and cut away the excess paste with scissors. Leave the petals to dry on rounded supports. When dry, dust as required.

4 When the throat assembly is hard, paint and dust as required. Patterns will depend upon the orchid you are making – there are thousands of varieties!





5 Using ¼-width white tape, tape on the two pointed petals (they will look a little like rabbits' ears above the centre of the flower). Add one rounded petal between these two and then the two final petals at the bottom under the throat, allowing the petals to cup naturally around the centre.



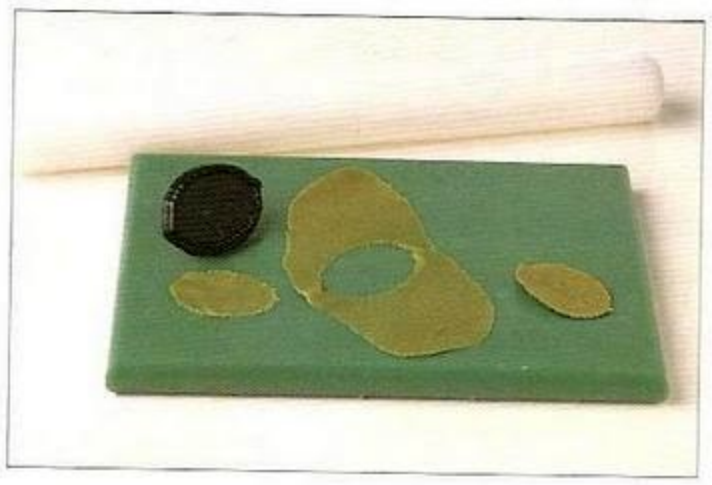
6 Tape the flower well, and then arrange it naturally, holding the petals at their base, with tweezers or fingertips.

ORCHID CORSAGE

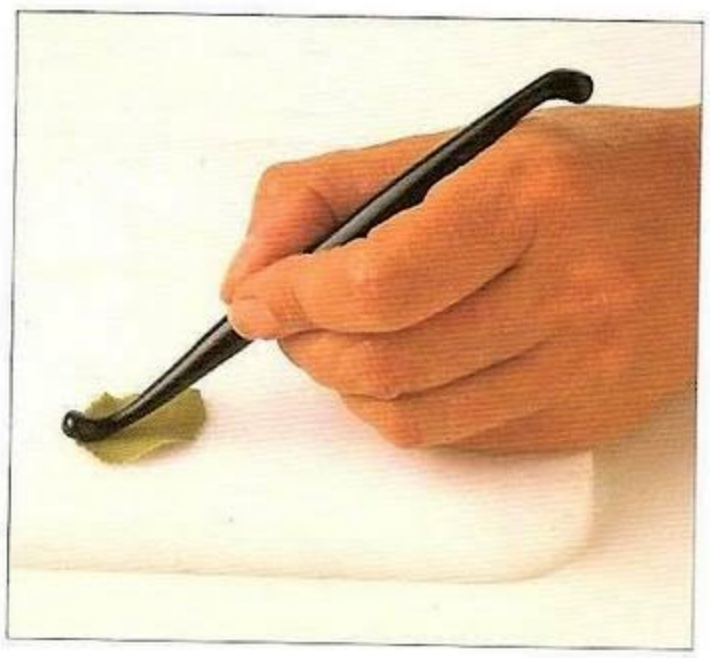
The corsage requires variegated ivy (page 103), white pulled jasmine flowers and buds (page 86) and two orchids. Tape the orchids together first so that they fit snugly together without the risk of breaking. Tape the leaves into natural sprays, adding the jasmine and buds, and then tape these to the back of the orchids. Ensure that you tape over any cut ends of wires to make a neat presentation. Finally, arrange into the required shape, using tweezers or fingertips.

LEAVES

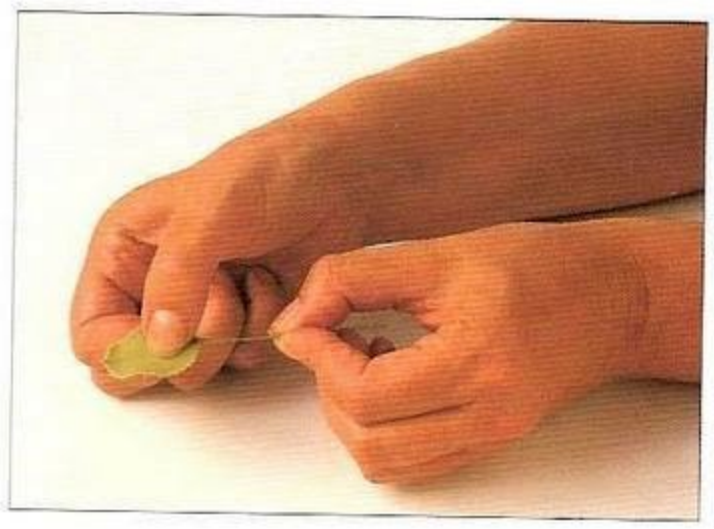
Once mastered, the basic technique for leaves can be applied to nearly any leaf. Rose leaves are shown here.



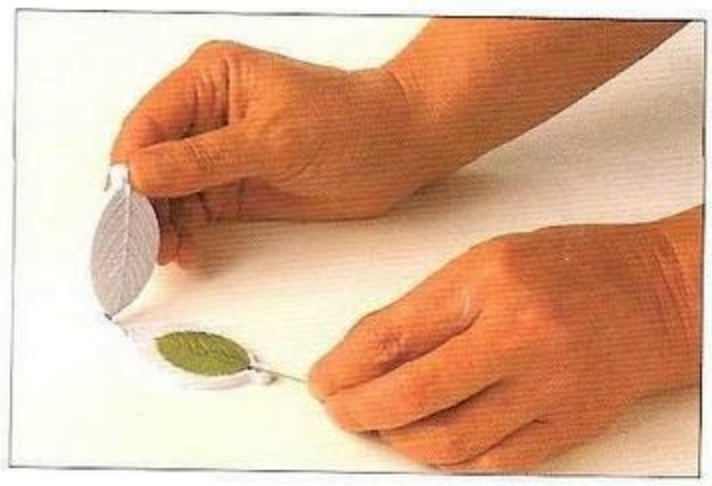
1 Roll out some green flower paste, angling the rolling pin slightly to create a wedge of thicker paste. (Alternatively, use a grooved board or rolling pin, commercially manufactured for this purpose.) Cut out a leaf, positioning the cutter so that the ridge of thicker paste is at the base of the leaf.



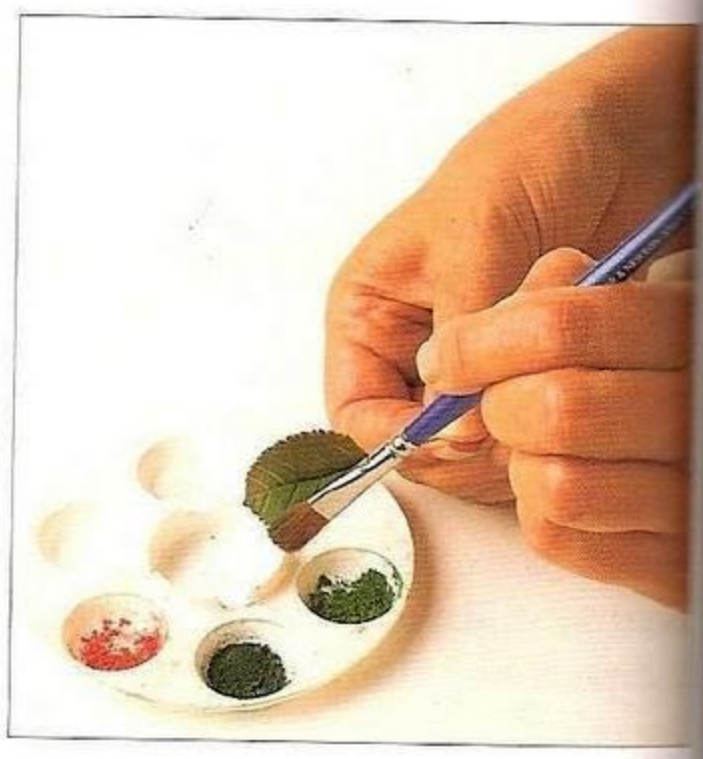
2 Soften the edge of the leaf with a dogbone tool on the palm of your hand or a pad of hard foam.



3 Dip a 26- or 28-gauge wire (depending on the size of the leaf) into glue, and then carefully push the wire into the ridge of paste in the leaf. Smooth the join.



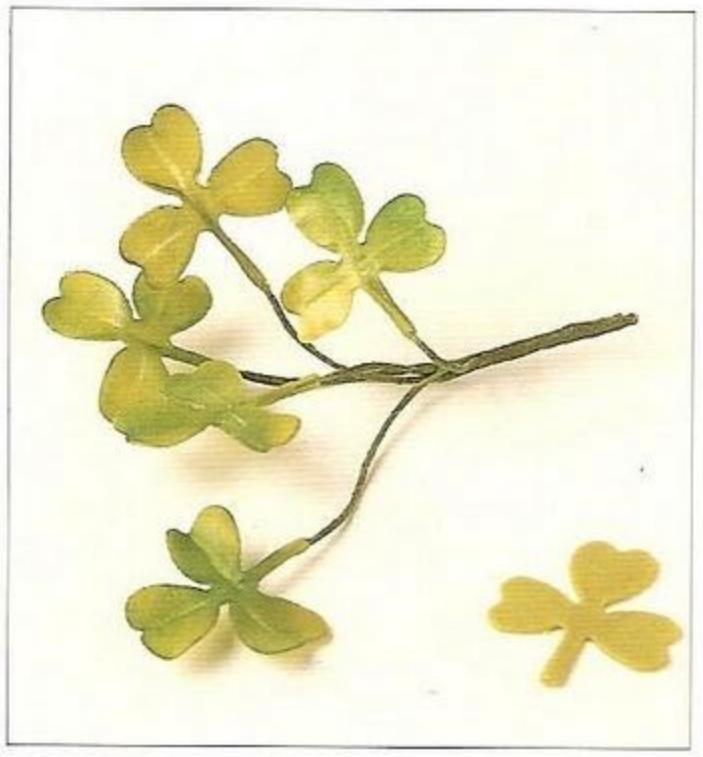
4 Vein the leaf in a leaf veiner, then remove the leaf and pinch the back of the centre vein with thumb and forefinger to give greater definition.



5 Colour the leaf with dusts as required; steam (page 85) to give a natural gloss.

6 Tape the leaves together in natural sprays, or use individually in arrangements.

OTHER LEAVES



LONG LEAVES Hang long leaves up to dry straight, twisting and curving as required with fingertips. Use a 28-gauge wire inside the leaf and tape on a heavier wire to give strength when the leaf is dry.

HOLLY This is a particularly shiny leaf which will need to be glazed with confectioners' varnish when the leaf has been coloured. Berries are made from small balls of red paste, individually wired and glazed.

SHAMROCK This pretty little leaf should be veined with a veining tool, each leaf of the three in the assembly being treated individually and tweaked to give natural shape.

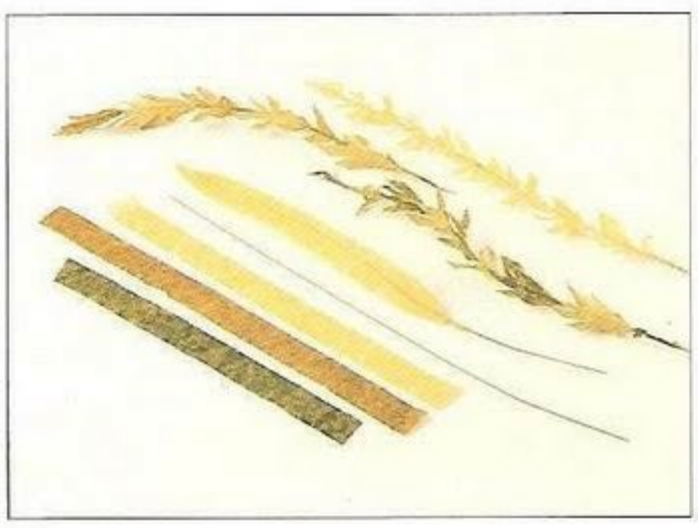
OTHER LEAF SHAPES (below) Gingko leaves (left) have soft curved stems. Oak leaves can be made in cream paste and dusted with a variety of green and brown dusts. They are shown here wired with twigs (page 104). The spray on the right shows how rose leaves, cut using a particular brand of rose leaf cutter, and taped around a central stem in pairs, give a very different result from the rose leaf spray on page 102. This is a useful leaf in arrangements.

VARIEGATED LEAVES There are many ways to variegate sugar leaves; the method you choose depends on the effect required. Ivy leaves generally have cream edges and two or three different greens dappled over the centre. Use a fine brush or a small piece of sponge to paint on the colours. Alternatively, paint all the edges of cream-coloured leaves with egg white and leave to dry before dusting the leaves with a variety of green petal dusts; the egg white acts as a barrier, keeping the edges cream-coloured.

TAPE LEAVES

These are useful in an arrangement to protect delicate flowers from touching each other and possibly breaking. They are also useful if you are unable to cut these leaves easily from flower paste.

DAFFODIL LEAF Lay a strip of tape flat, sticky side up, and place a 28-gauge wire along half its length. Fold the tape over the end of the wire, and press firmly to join the two lengths of tape together, encasing the wire. Use scissors to trim a point in the top of the tape and to curve the bottom into the wire. Curl, curve and twist as desired.

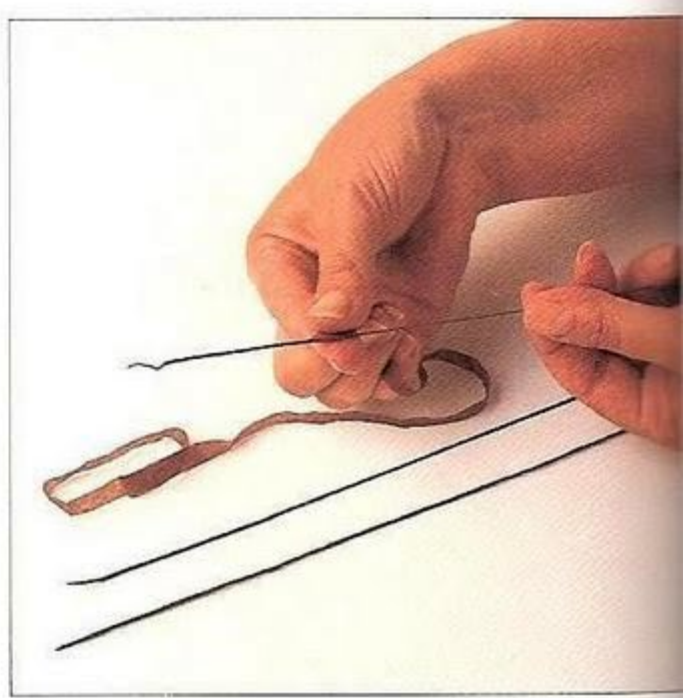


FERN Make the daffodil type leaf (above) and, while the leaf is still flat, make tiny snips diagonally into the tape on both sides of the wire. Twist the tape around the wire for a very frilled effect. Different effects can be achieved by using two colours of tape.

CREEPERS AND TENDRILS Cut a length of ½-width florists' tape and twist it, stretching the tape to release the glue as you do so. Coil the twisted tape around a cocktail stick (toothpick) or satay stick, then gently pull the stick away, leaving the tape coiled as required.

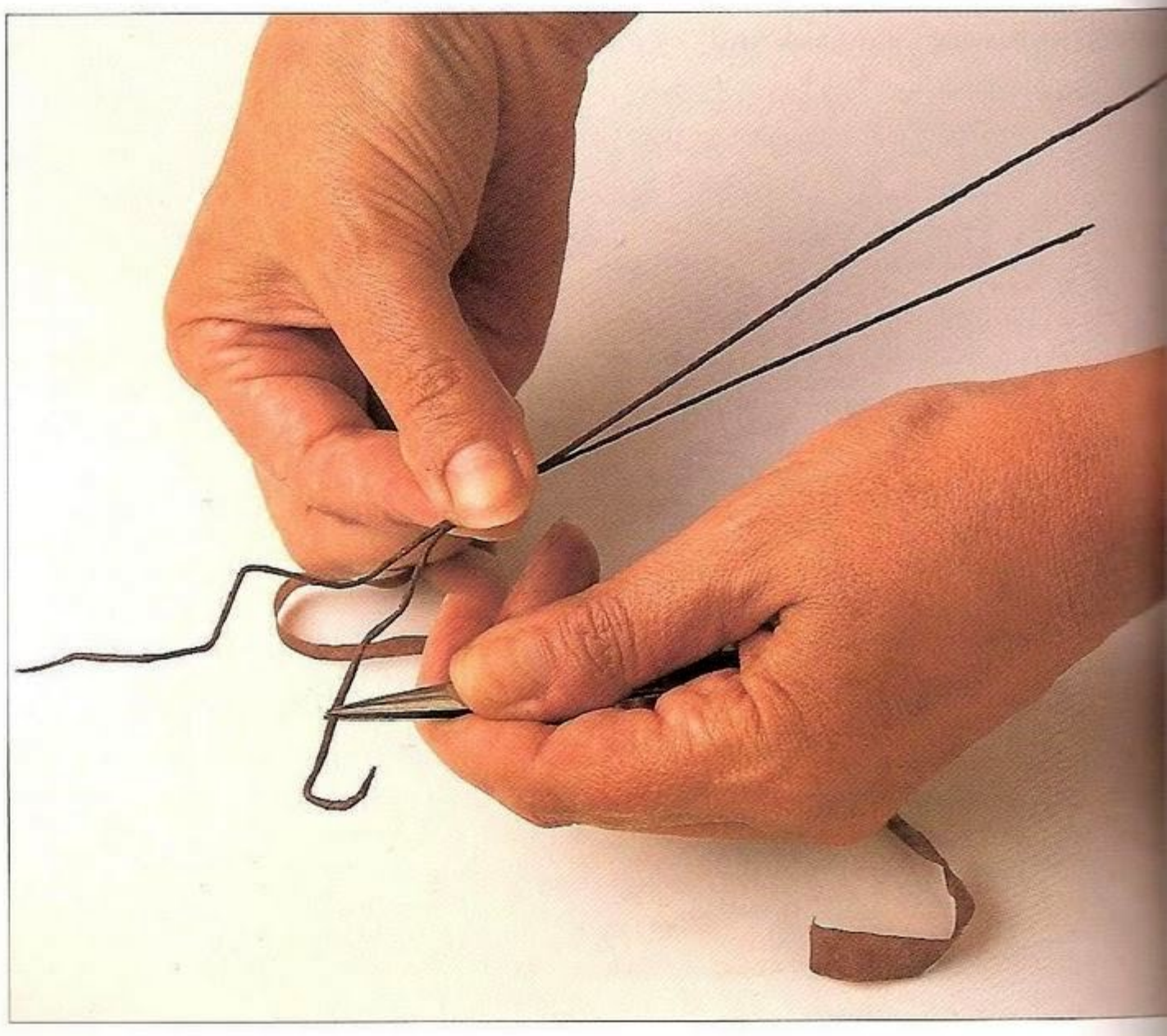
TWIGS

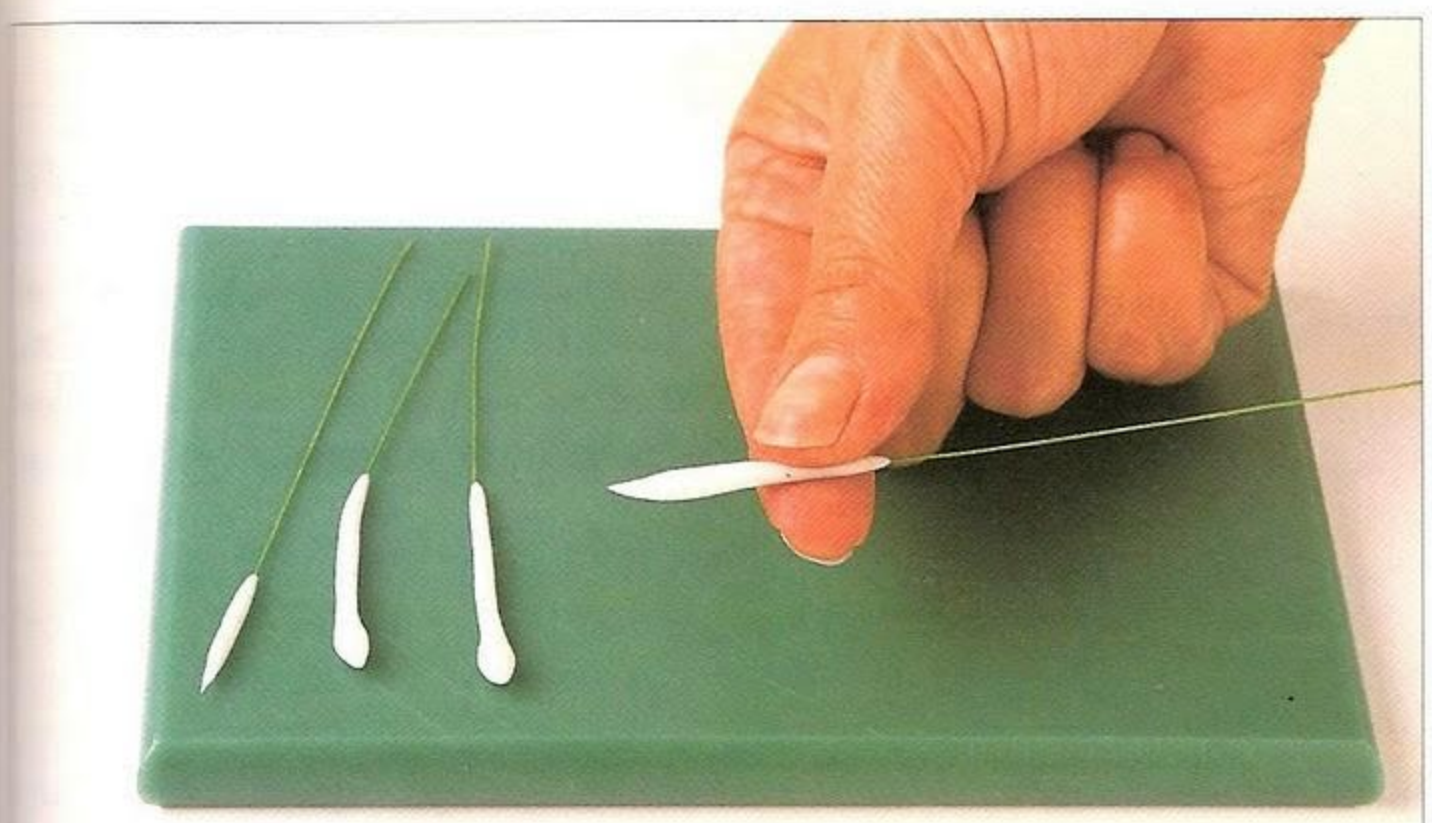
1 Twist ½-width brown tape on to a 24- or 26-gauge wire. After about 2.5cm (1 inch) has been cov-



ered, gently pull the wire downwards, almost out of the tape. Continue wrapping tape, leaving an unwired twist of tape at the top. Continue to tape, adding extra wires to create thickness if required, depending on the length of twig needed.

2 Use tweezers or fingertips to bend the taped wire into natural shapes.



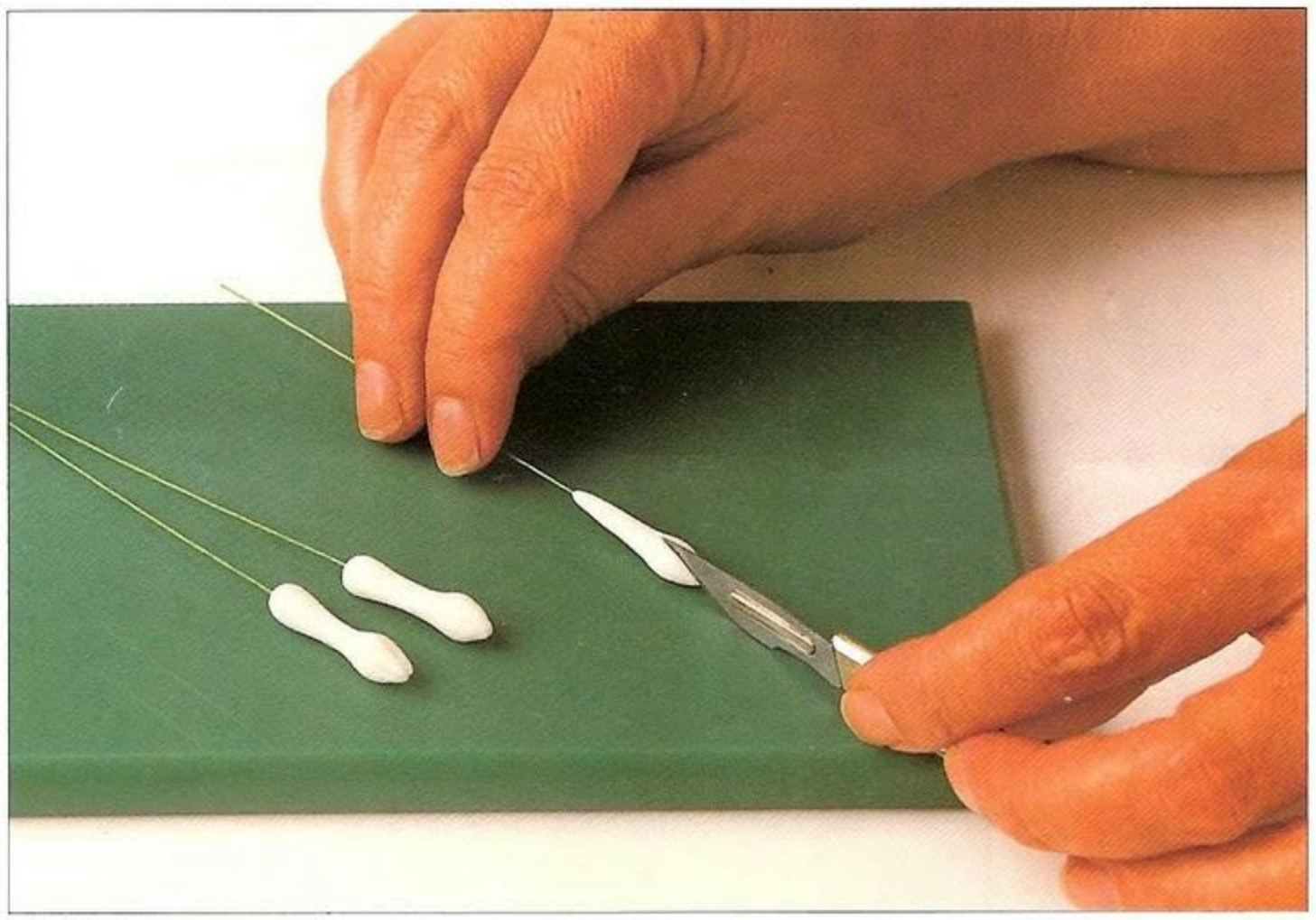


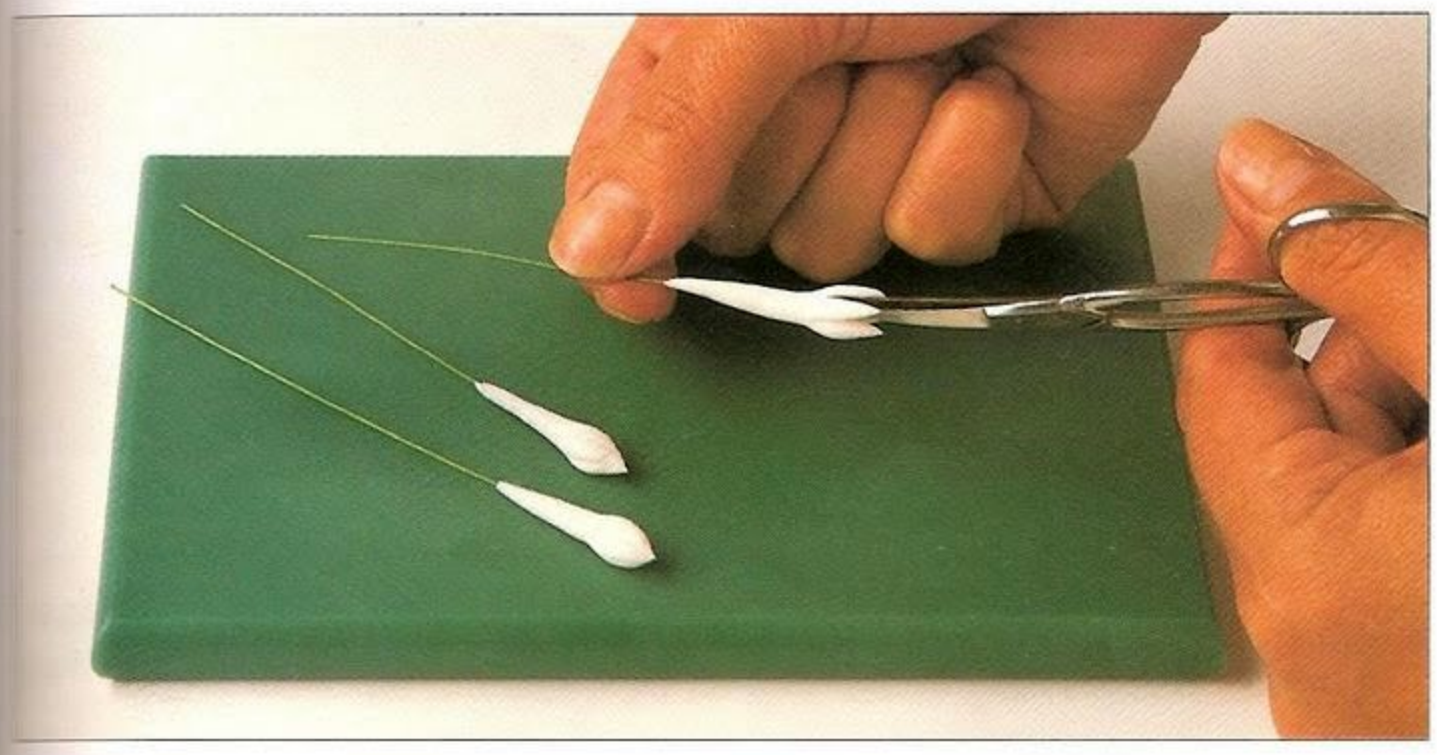
BUDS

1 Four types of buds are shown above; the shape will depend upon the flower for which they are being made. Roll the paste firmly into position around the wire (the wires rarely need gluing into place).

2 Slightly open buds can be marked with a scalpel. When dusted, this marking will show quite strongly.

3 Buds for fleshy flowers need a stronger marking. Shape the bud and cut a cross through the top with scissors. Lightly squeeze these cuts back together and twist if required.





EXPERT ADVICE

Remember that buds are unopened flowers, so they should be similar in length to the petals of the actual flower. Tightly shut buds should be coloured green; buds that are just beginning to open can be a darker shade of the flower colour. Add calyxes to buds as well as to open flowers.

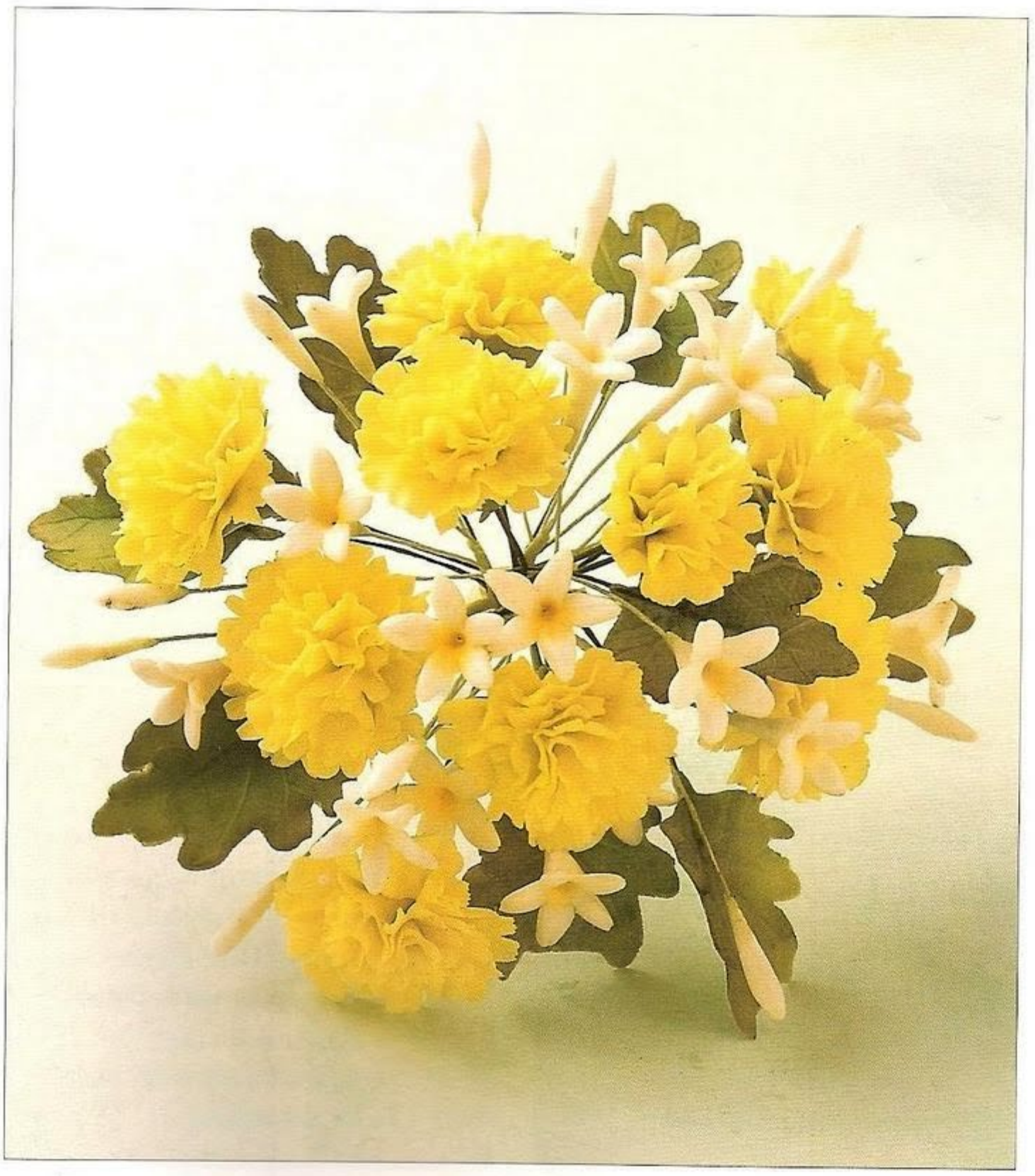
ARRANGING SUGAR FLOWERS

Just as real flowers can be arranged in a variety of ways, sugar flowers can be wired together in posies, sprays and bouquets for decorating cakes or making attractive table centrepieces. Remember, though, that sugar flowers are not as forgiving as fresh flowers. If they just knock together they are likely to chip or break rather than ease each other into position. To help prevent this, strengthen the stems with heavier wires, thus making the flowers less likely to swing into one another.

POSY

For this traditional arrangement, flowers are taped together in a circular form with a domed centre. Start with the largest flower in the centre and add to this, gradually turning the posy round, making sure that you add flowers and leaves evenly. Ribbon loops (page 110) can be incorporated if desired.

The Victorian posy is built up in a similar way, but the flowers in each 'row' are always the same. For example, start with a rose in the centre, then surround with a circle of primroses, then a circle of violets, and so on, finishing with a circle of leaves and a posy frill.



RETURN

The return is a very small wired arrangement usually used as a supplementary decoration on large cakes, perhaps made up in matching pairs or fours. The return is mainly used for building more complicated flower arrangements.

The aim is to achieve an overall triangular shape. Start with buds or the smallest flowers at the point of the return, taping them together with ¼- or ⅓-width florists' tape to keep the stems light and slim. Work your way up, adding to and widening the shape to achieve a triangle. As you add flowers, trim away any unwanted wires, to keep the main stem slender, but taking care not to trim away too much as this might lessen the strength of the stems.

GÂTEAUX

This chapter brings together everything required to make the most delicious gâteaux, including recipes for icings, frostings and coatings. Chocolate gâteaux are always popular, whether spread simply with buttercream or coated with a rich, smooth layer of ganache or pure chocolate. A section on chocolate techniques, including piping with chocolate and making chocolate cutouts and shapes, provides ample scope for the cake decorator.

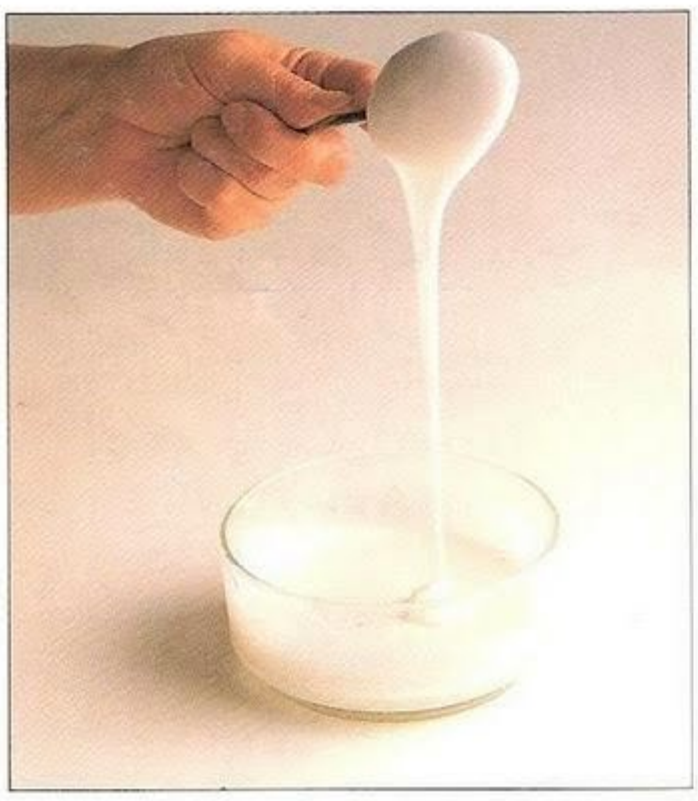
ICINGS FOR GATEAUX

Unlike celebration cakes, gâteaux are usually coated in a soft icing, such as buttercream, fudge frosting, or even fresh whipped cream.

Glacé Icing

Glacé icing is very quick and easy to make, and, provided you work quickly, can produce attractive designs.

225g (8oz/1½ cups) icing (confectioners') sugar
6 teaspoons boiling water



Sift the icing sugar into a bowl and slowly stir in the boiling water until all the sugar is incorporated and the icing is smooth. Add colouring as required.

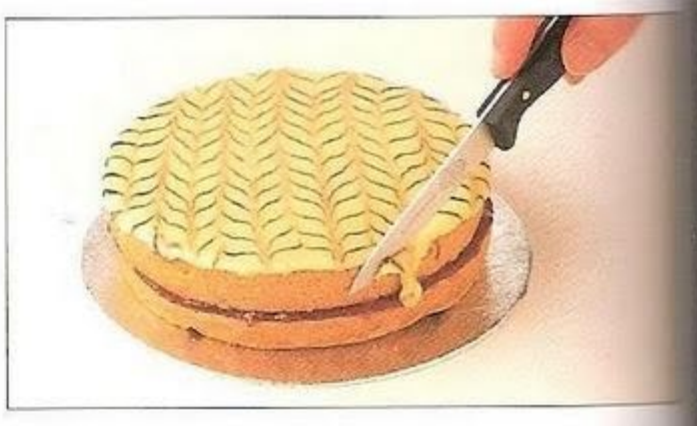
FEATHER ICING

1 Coat the top of a cake with boiled apricot glaze (page 13) and leave to set for approximately 5 minutes. Make up some glacé icing, take out 1 tablespoon, colour as required, and place in a greaseproof paper piping bag. Put this to one side while you pour the rest of the icing (coloured if required) over the glazed surface of the cake.

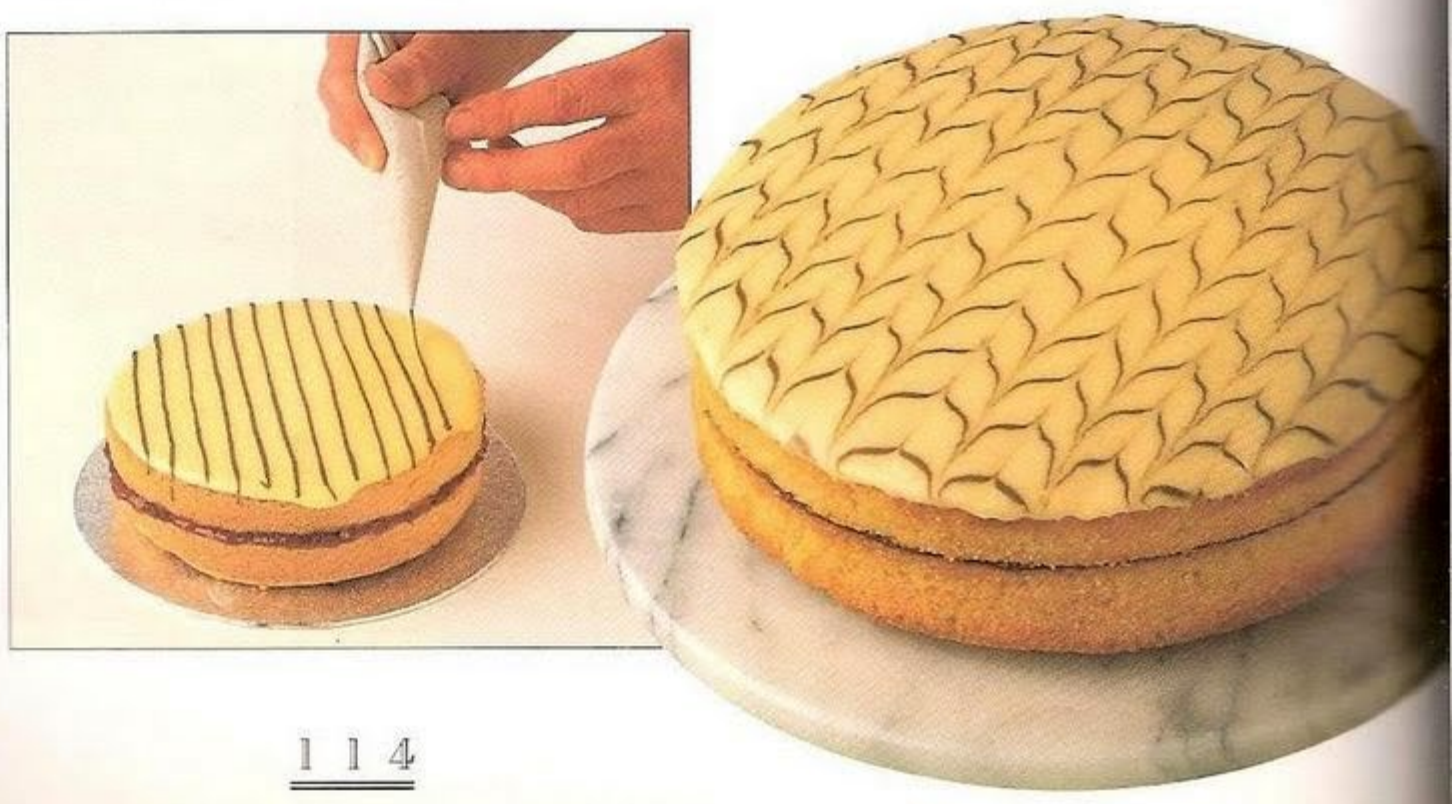
2 Spread the icing over the surface of the cake with a palette knife.

3 Working very quickly, cut a small hole in the end of the piping bag and pipe a series of parallel lines across the still soft surface of the coated cake.

4 Using the back of a pointed knife, quickly pull the tip of the knife through the soft icing in a series of lines at 90° to the piped lines. Repeat, making lines across the cake in the opposite direction, between the lines already scored. Leave to set.



5 When the icing has set, clean away any drips from the sides of the cake with a sharp knife.



Chocolate and Mint Torte

MATERIALS

20cm (8 inch) chocolate Victoria sandwich cake (page 9)
20cm (8 inch) Victoria sandwich cake flavoured with peppermint essence and coloured with green food colouring (page 9)
25cm (10 inch) cake board
Quantity chocolate continental buttercream (page 115)
Chocolate vermicelli

EQUIPMENT

Plain round cutters
Icing comb
Torten marker, optional
Piping bag
No. 42 piping tube (tip)

1 Cut the cakes into rings and reassemble, layering and coating with continental buttercream as described in steps 1–4 on page 118. Coat the lower half of the cake sides with chocolate vermicelli (step 5, page 118). Mark the top of the cake into portions with a torten marker or knife (step 6, page 118).

2 Decorate the top of the cake as required, choosing a pattern for piping from the range shown. Note that the patterns shown are examples only; choose one pattern and repeat it in all the segments, or choose two patterns and alternate them. Decorate with sweets, if liked.

3 Chill the torten well before serving to ensure a neat, clean cut.

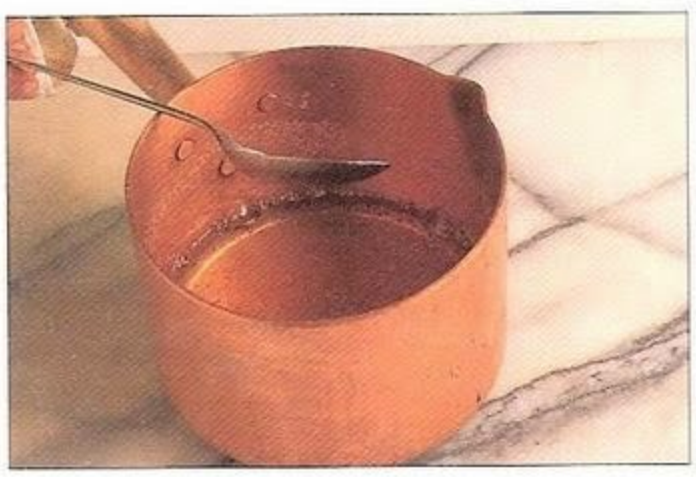
FONDANT

The main attraction of fondant is the smooth, glossy surface it gives to both large and small cakes.

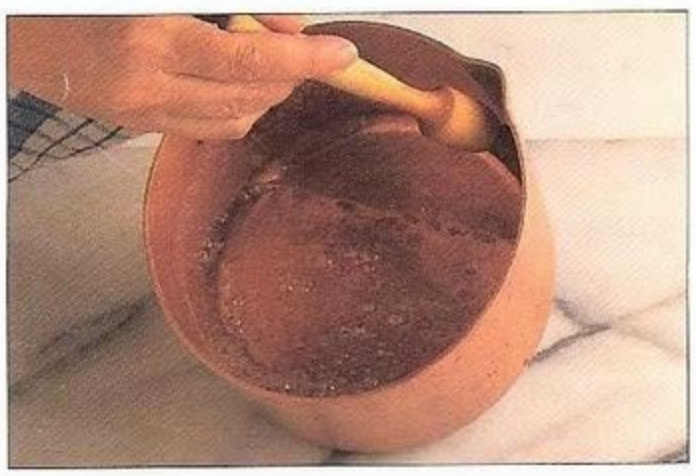
Fondant

Fondant can be bought commercially but usually only in large quantities. This recipe gives a small amount and is easily made.

150ml (¼ pint/⅔ cup) water
450g (1lb/2 cups) granulated sugar
150ml (¼ pint/⅔ cup) liquid glucose

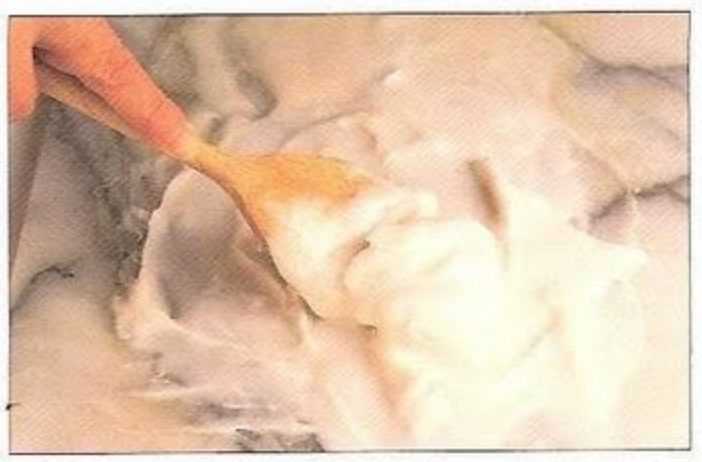


1 Using a strong, heavy-based saucepan (preferably copper), bring the water and sugar to the boil, stirring continuously with a spoon. When the mixture reaches boiling point and the sugar has dissolved, remove any scum from the surface with a metal spoon.



2 Wash down the sides of the pan with a clean pastry brush and water. This will remove any crystals of undissolved sugar which, if left, can fall back into the mixture and start a premature – and unwanted – re-crystallization process. At this stage, whilst the mixture is still boiling, add the liquid glucose. Put a sugar thermometer in the syrup, and continue to boil until the mixture reaches 115°C (245°F).

3 Remove the pan from the heat. Lightly oil a clean, dry surface (preferably marble) and pour on the sugar solution. Leave to cool until the mixture reaches 35°C (98°F).



4 Agitate the solution by stirring quickly in circular or backwards and forwards movements with a wooden spoon, until the sugar becomes a firm, white mass. Use a plastic scraper to remove the fondant from the surface into a bowl. Cover with a very thin layer of water until required for use.

USING FONDANT

To achieve a smooth, glossy fondant coating, it is important to carefully control the temperature of the fondant during the warming process prior to coating. Should the fondant get too hot at this stage, the gloss will not be achieved and a grey, dull coat will be produced instead. You will need to prepare some stock syrup to adjust the consistency of the fondant.

Stock Syrup

300ml (½ pint/1¼ cups) water
350g (12oz/1½ cups) granulated sugar

Place the water in a saucepan and add the sugar. Bring the mixture to the boil, stirring gently until all the sugar has dissolved. Leave to cool, then store in a clean jar with a tight-fitting lid. The stock syrup should be cold before use.

Fondant Fancies

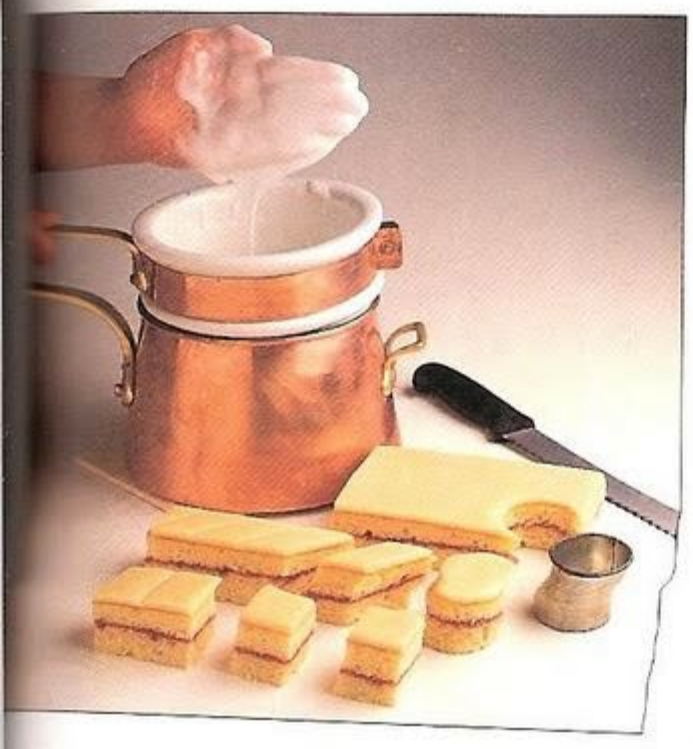
MATERIALS

15x10cm (6x4 inch) piece of Genoese (page 10)
50g (2oz) marzipan (almond paste)
1 tablespoon Apricot glaze (page 15)
Fondant
Stock syrup

EQUIPMENT

Round metal cutter, optional
Sugar thermometer
Piping bag

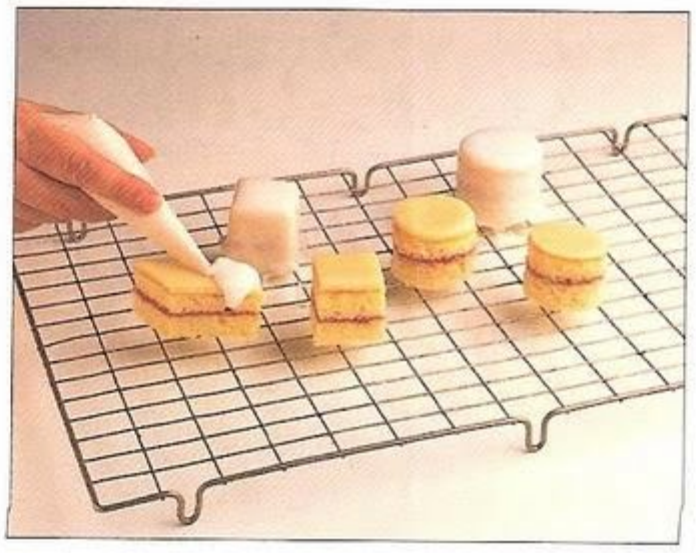
1 Prepare the Genoese as described on page 11, and coat with apricot glaze. Roll out a thin strip



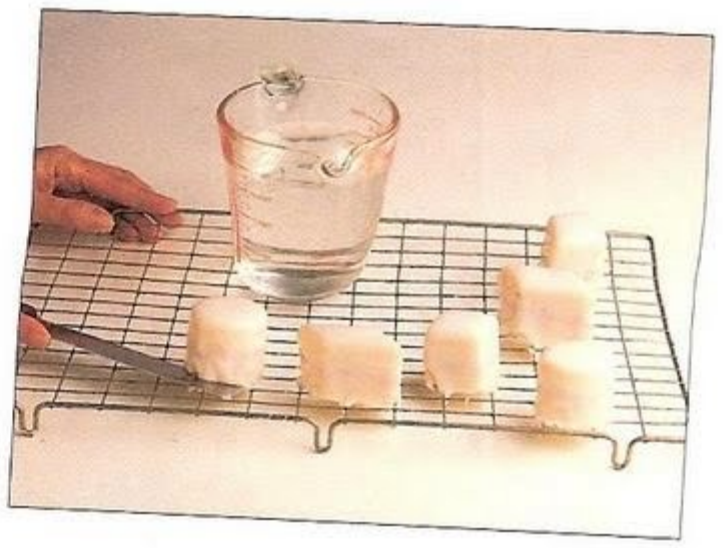
f marzipan and lower the glazed enoese surface on to the marzipan. im away the excess marzipan with sharp knife, and then cut the cake to the required shapes with a arp serrated knife or metal cut-s. Turn the cakes marzipan-side

Prepare the fondant by warming double boiler or bowl over a pan hot water (*bain marie*) until d temperature is reached C/98.4°F). Adjust the consis-y by adding small amounts of syrup; the consistency should milar to that of double cream. nsure the correct temperature is ed, stir the fondant during warming process with hand, and do not the consistency you have d the correct rature.

ace the pre-Genoese on a wire Pour the fondant rge piping cut a hole inch diame-the end of the e the coating care-



fully over the Genoese pieces, ensuring that the sides are well coated. Leave on the rack until set.



3 When the fondant has set, remove the fancies from the rack by sliding a palette knife (which has been dipped in hot water) under the base of each cake. Decorate as required (see below), and place in small paper cases or directly on to a serving plate.

DECORATIONS

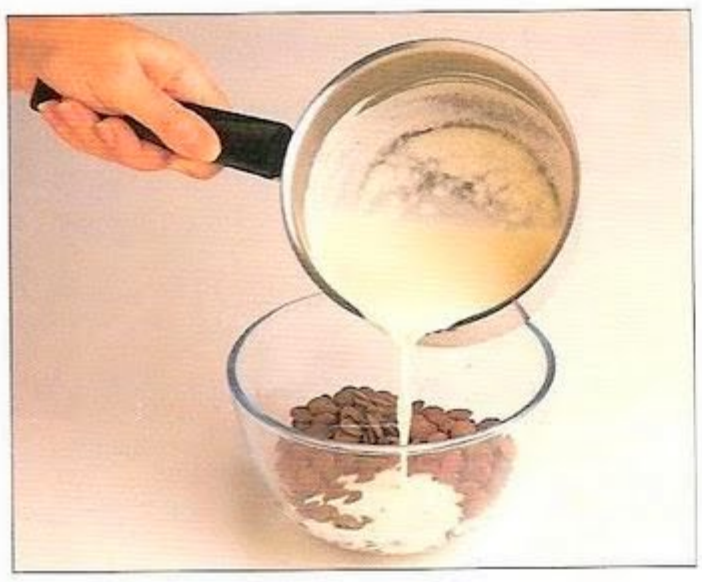
To produce a variety of colours, first warm the fondant to the correct *temperature and consistency. Coat some of the Genoese pieces with white fondant, then colour the fondant* either pink or yellow and apply that. By adding orange at this stage you will obtain an apricot or peach colour. After that, by adding melted chocolate or liquid coffee, you can apply the darker shades. (Note that, *when adding melted chocolate to* the fondant, the consistency will thicken and you will need to add more stock syrup to bring the fondant back to a coating consistency.) Ensure the fondant temperature is kept at a constant blood heat (38°C/98.4°F). After the fondant coating has set, decorate with piped fondant and handmade or bought edible decorations.

GANACHE

Ganache is a rich mixture of cream and chocolate. It can be used in many ways: whipped as a filling or coating, or warmed for a pour-over coating. When set it can be used to fill chocolates. Delicious!

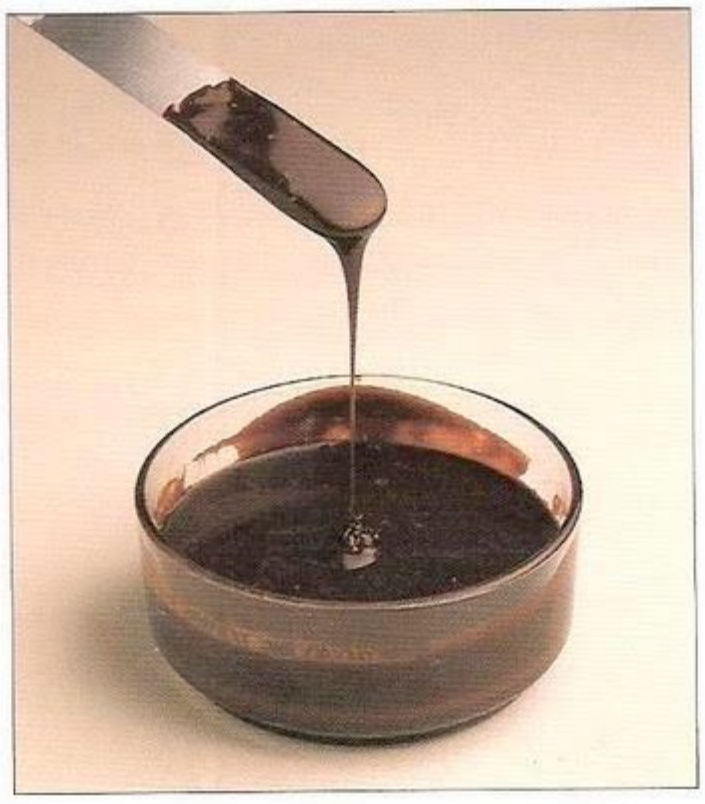
Ganache

150ml (¼ pint/⅔ cup) whipping cream
225g (8oz) plain chocolate, broken into small pieces



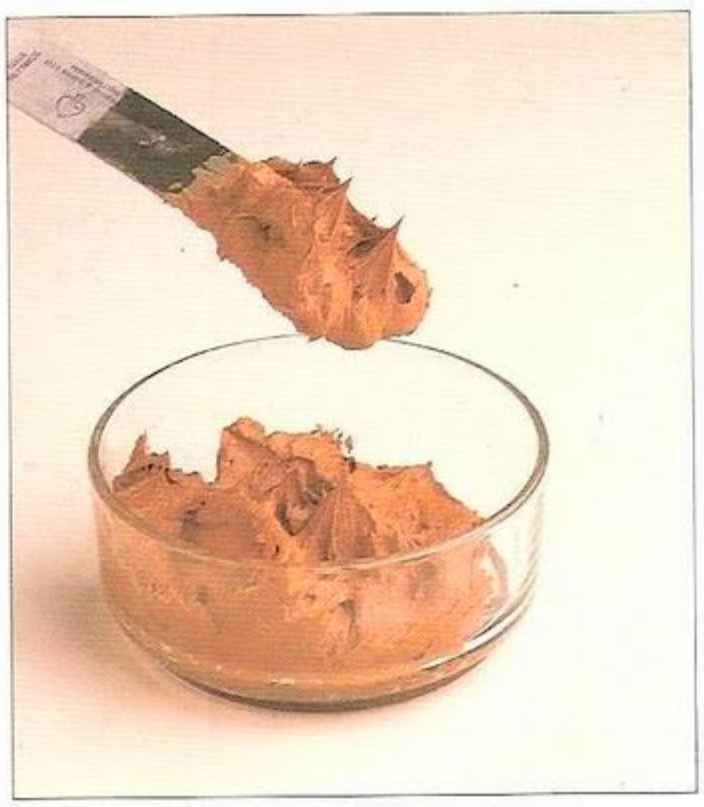
1 Put the cream in a saucepan and heat gently until boiling. Remove from the heat and pour over the chocolate. Stir until the chocolate has melted and has blended with the cream into a rich dark mixture. Pour into a clean bowl.

2 Allow the ganache to cool and set. It can be stored in this form until required. If refrigerated, ganache will keep for several weeks.



POURING GANACHE

If using ganache to pour over a cake, bring the set ganache to a pouring consistency by warming gently.



WHISKED GANACHE

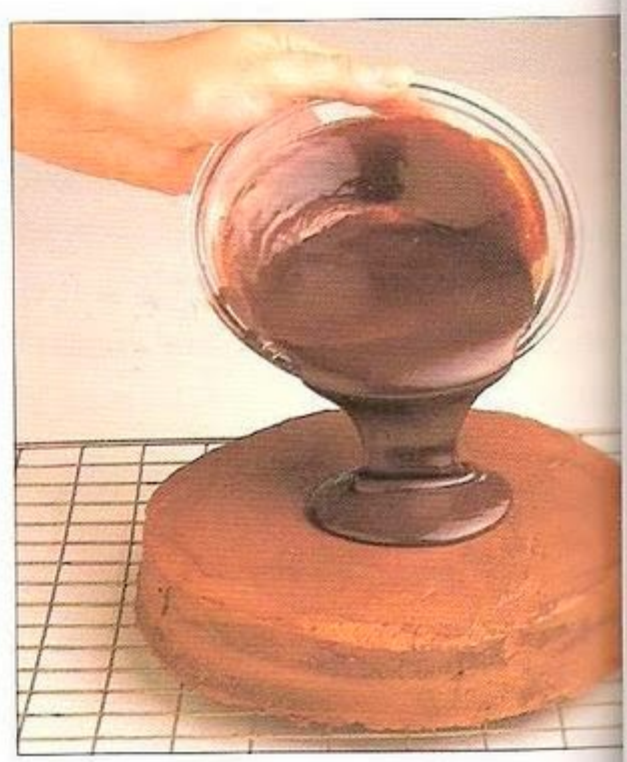
Ganache can also be used for filling and piping on to cakes. The set ganache should be whipped in a mixer with a balloon whisk until light, fluffy and paler.

EXPERT ADVICE

Ganache should be at room temperature before whisking. If, once the ganache is whisked it starts to curdle (possibly because the mixture was a little cool), add a knob of butter or margarine and whisk again.

USING GANACHE

1 Place some set ganache in bowl of an electric mixer, and wh with a balloon whisk until li fluffy and paler. Use to fill and th ly coat the required cake base. C in the refrigerator.



2 Warm some set ganache bowl over hot water or on a low ting in the microwave. Place chilled, coated cake on a wire r Pour the ganache over the cake spread with a palette knife, ma sure that the sides are coated. the cake off the wire rack with palette knife and place in posi on a cake board. Leave to set in refrigerator.

CHOCOLATE

Chocolate is available in a variety of strengths and colours, the most common being plain (dark), milk (light) and white chocolate, as drops or in slab or bar form. Chocolate couverture (which contains cocoa butter and needs special handling) sets relatively hard with a high gloss, and is used for making chocolates or particularly delicate or fragile decorative pieces. Chocolate-flavoured coatings are easy to handle as they contain vegetable fat (shortening) and do not need 'tempering'. All the instructions in this section refer to chocolate-flavoured coatings.

MELTING CHOCOLATE-FLAVOURED COATINGS

Break the chocolate into pieces, and put in the top of a double boiler or into a heatproof bowl over a pan of hot water (*bain marie*). Heat gently, stirring occasionally, until the chocolate has melted. Alternatively, melt the chocolate on low power in a microwave, referring to individual microwave instructions for time and setting. Do not overheat the chocolate or it will become stiff, and will set with a dull, matte finish. To avoid overheating, do not allow the hot water to touch the bottom of the top pan or bowl containing the chocolate. Do not allow water to mix with the chocolate as this will also make it stiff and difficult to use.

COATING WITH CHOCOLATE

1 Mask the cake with a thin layer of chocolate buttercream (page 115) to ensure that there are no loose crumbs. Chill the cake briefly in the refrigerator, then place on a wire rack. Melt the chocolate as described left, and pour over the cake.

2 Smooth the melted chocolate over the cake, easing it over the edge and down the sides of the cake with a palette knife, making sure that all the sides are coated. To make sure that the chocolate is flat and even, lift one corner of the wire rack and tap gently on the surface below. Allow to set.

3 Melt a little chocolate of a different colour to the coating, and place in a small greaseproof piping bag. Cut a small hole (the size of a no. 1 tube/tip) and squeeze the bag to obtain a steady stream of chocolate. With a quick backwards and forwards movement over and beyond the edge of the cake, spin lines of chocolate over the surface.

Chocolate Roll Gâteau

MATERIALS

m (6 inch) chocolate Victoria sandwich cake (page 9)
hocolate buttercream (page 115)
5g (8oz) dark chocolate-flavoured coating, broken into pieces
0g (4oz) light chocolate-flavoured coating
g (1oz) white chocolate-flavoured coating
0cm (8 inch) round cake drum

EQUIPMENT

Piping bags
Clean paint scraper
No. 13 piping tube (tip)

ill and mask the cake with uttercream and refrigerate ake. Melt the dark choco- nd use to coat the cake as n on page 126. Melt ght chocolate, place e in a greaseproof and cut a small in the tip. Spin of light choco- wer the whole e of the cake 126).

Make a circular ate the size of op of the cake a sheet of grease- paper, and cut in Place the two halves paper on the surface cake, leaving a gap of ximately 3cm (1½ inch- tween them and lining up traight edges of the paper the lines of spun chocolate on ke. Spin white chocolate over posed area so that the lines are t angles to those underneath.

3 Make chocolate rolls as shown on page 129, and place on two opposite quarters of the cake, cutting to fit with a hot knife.

4 Carefully lift the cake with a palette knife and place on the cake drum. Pipe a shell border of chocolate buttercream on the base edge with a no. 13 tube.

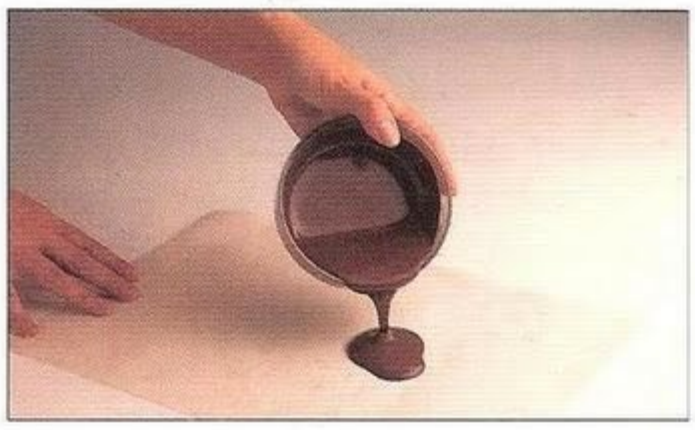
EXPERT ADVICE

To cut the chocolate rolls, fill a tall jug with boiling water and stand the knife in it. Each time you cut, take the knife, now hot, and wipe it dry with a clean cloth. Make the cut and then return the knife to the water. This produces a very clean cut – and a clean knife.

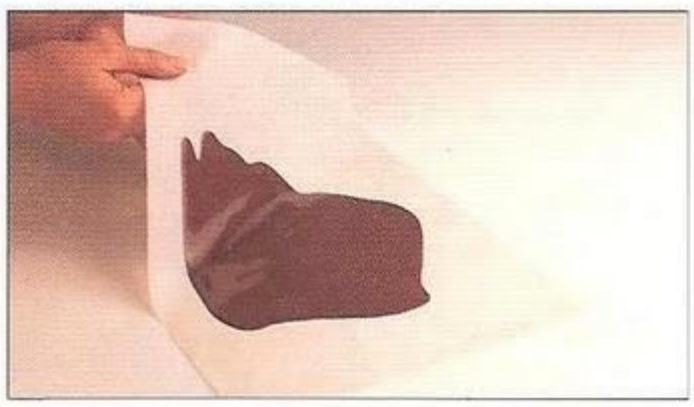
Chocolate Decorations

Chocolate is very adaptable and can be used to make many different decorations which are simple, but delicious, and look attractive on all sorts of gâteaux and torten.

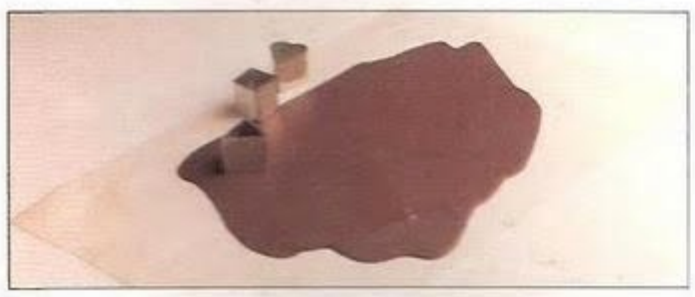
Chocolate Cutouts



1 Melt the chocolate and pour on to a sheet of greaseproof paper. Spread out the chocolate with a palette knife.



2 Lift one edge of the paper and gently flick the paper, allowing the chocolate to spread further and encouraging the palette knife lines to disappear. Leave to set.



3 When the chocolate is set but not hard, cut out the required shapes using metal cutters.

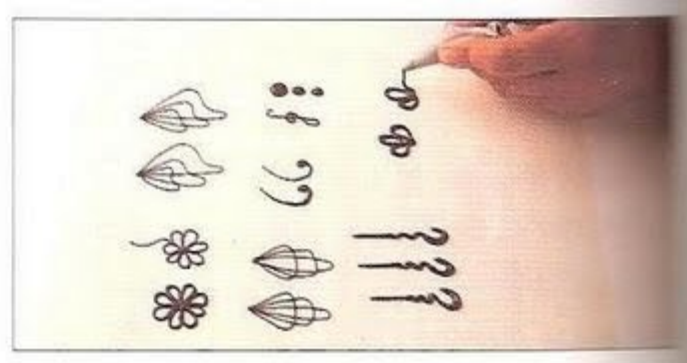
4 Alternatively, to cut out shapes of your own choice, use a sharp knife with a rocking action for straight lines, or the tip of a sharp knife for curves.

5 When the shapes are firmly set, ease them away from the greaseproof paper by sliding a knife underneath. Lift them into the finished position by lightly holding the sides of the shapes so that no fingermarks are left on the chocolate surface.

Chocolate Piping

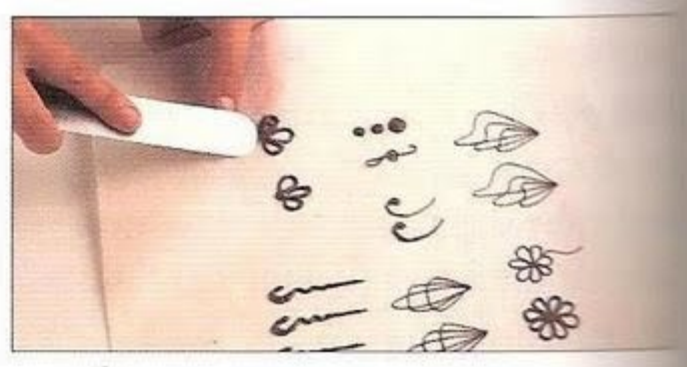
1 To give greater control of melted chocolate for piping designs, carefully stir in a few drops of glycerine. Allow time for the chocolate to react with the glycerine to create

the new consistency. This could take a few seconds.



2 Place the piping chocolate in a small greaseproof piping bag and cut a small hole (approximately the size of a no. 1 tube/tip) in its point. Pipe the required designs on to a sheet of greaseproof paper and leave to set. Chill if necessary.

3 Carefully ease each piece away from the paper using a palette knife which can also be used to slide the piped decoration into position.

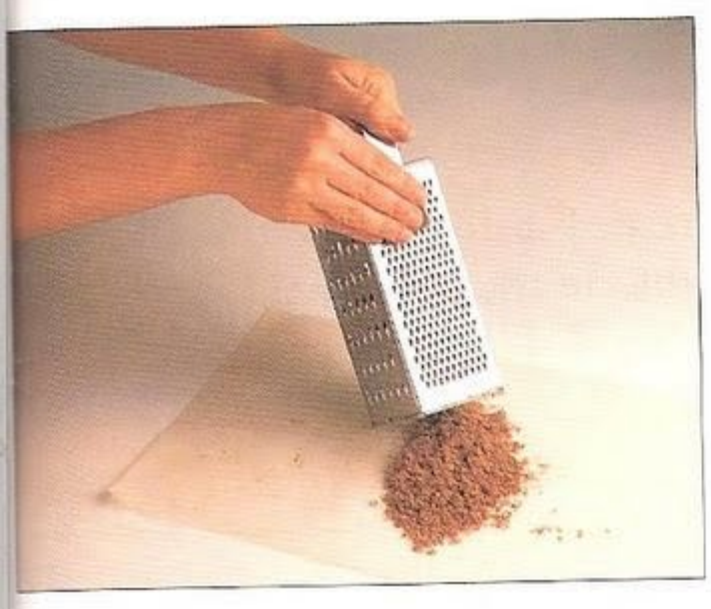


Using Chocolate Cutouts and Piping

Chocolate is a very versatile medium. The cake illustrated shows twelve different ideas for decorating torten using chocolate cutouts and piping. The cake is coated in orange buttercream, and grated chocolate (see below) is used to decorate the centre and base of the cake.

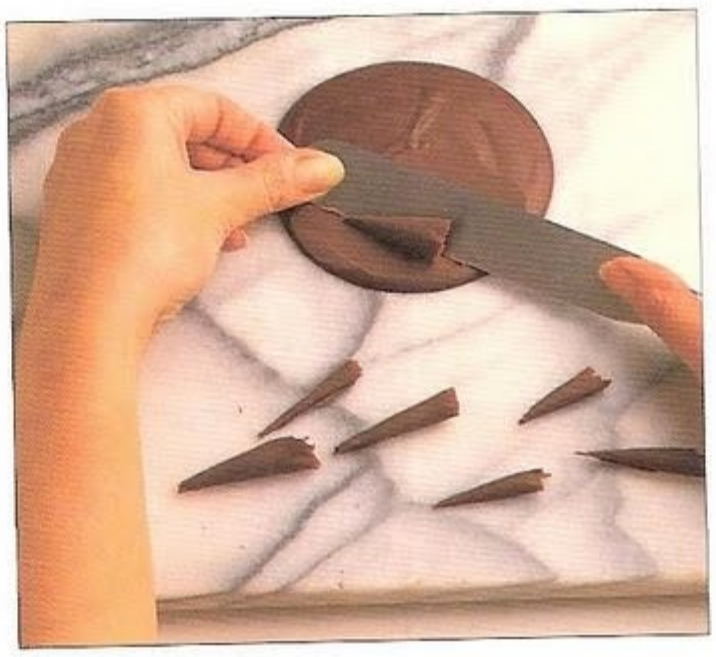
Grated Chocolate

Different textures of chocolate can be created by using a simple grater. Be careful to protect your fingertips when grating; use large blocks of chocolate, discarding the small ends which can be used for melting.



Fine shred This is achieved using the small blades on the grater; use for smaller cakes or coating the side of a gâteau as an alternative to chocolate vermicelli.

Large shred A heavier shred gives the chocolate the appearance of small curls which can be used on larger gâteaux.



Chocolate Cones

Pour melted chocolate on to a work surface or marble slab, and leave to set. Holding the tip of a palette knife with your thumb, scrape across the surface of the chocolate in a circular movement, allowing the chocolate to curl naturally, in front of the knife, into a cone.

Chocolate Rolls

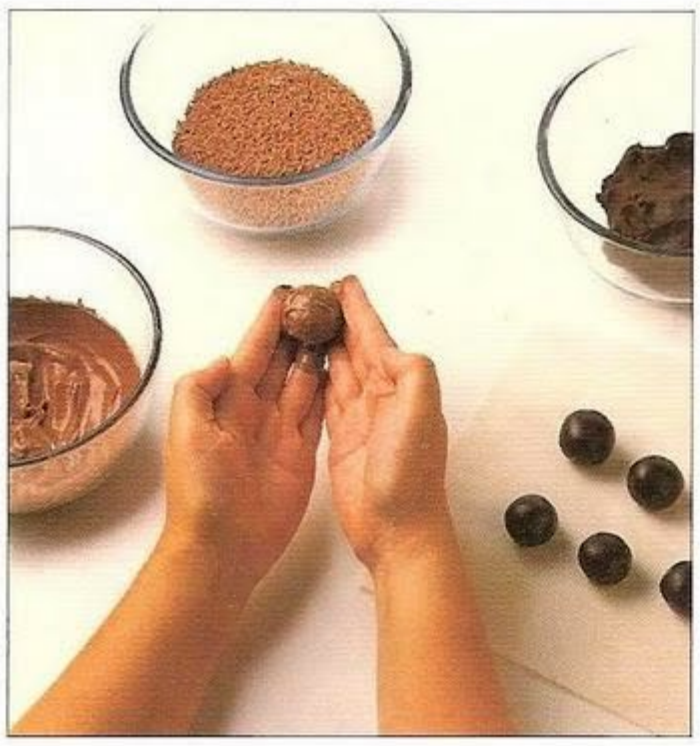
Pour melted chocolate on to a work surface or marble slab, and spread thinly and evenly with a palette knife. Leave until barely set. Cut the chocolate to the width of a clean paint scraper, then place the scraper at an angle of 45° to the chocolate. Push the scraper forwards, encouraging the chocolate to curl in front of the scraper. Trim the rolls to the required size with a hot knife (see Expert Advice on page 127).

Chocolate Truffles

This recipe has been included to help use up cake trimmings. If you don't have enough trimmings, either save what you have in the freezer and collect more, or make a quick cake!

900g (2lb) sponge cake trimmings
100g (4oz/ ½cup) apricot jam
100g (4oz/ ½ cup) Buttercream (page 115)
50ml (2fl oz/ ¼ cup) rum (absolute minimum!)
400g (14oz) chocolate, melted
3–4 tablespoons chocolate vermicelli

1 Place the cake trimmings in the bowl of an electric mixer, and use a beater to break down to crumbs. With the machine still beating, add the jam, buttercream, rum and finally all but 3 tablespoons of the melted chocolate. You should achieve a firm mixture. If the mixture is soft, leave in a cool place for a few hours. When firm enough to handle, roll into small balls.



2 Roll the truffles in melted chocolate with your fingertips. Immediately drop the chocolate-coated balls into vermicelli, and roll in the vermicelli until well coated. Place on greaseproof paper to set.

EXPERT ADVICE

The truffle-making process is much easier with two pairs of hands – one dipping the balls in chocolate and the other coating them in vermicelli. Apply only a thin layer of chocolate to each truffle before dipping in vermicelli. Too much chocolate will distort the shape of the truffle or drip into the vermicelli, creating lumps.

ALTERNATIVE FINISHES

DIFFERENT-COLOURED CHOCOLATE Two coats, or even three for white chocolate, will be required for an attractive finish. For each coat, roll each truffle in melted chocolate with your fingertips, leaving to set between coats.

COCOA POWDER AND ICING (CONFECTIONERS') SUGAR Roll the truffle mixture into balls and drop directly into this powder mixture to coat.

ROASTED CHOPPED NUTS Roll the truffle mixture into balls and drop directly into roasted chopped nuts, turning to coat. Alternatively, mix the nuts with melted chocolate and coat using fingertips.